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THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION,  
ITS CAUSES AND  
CONSEQUENCES.

1871

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HISTORY  
OF THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION,  
ITS  
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES.

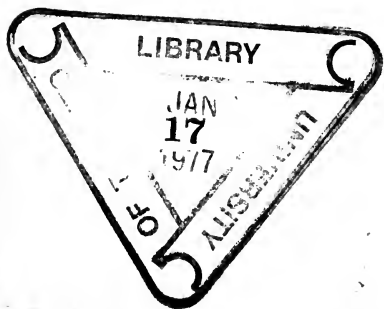


BY FREDERICA MACLEAN ROWAN.

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN the little work here presented to the public, the faults of the people are more insisted upon than those of the rulers, because it is written for the former, not for the latter, and because, if the latter have a lesson to learn from history, the former have a still greater one, and one that, if well learnt by them, will suffice for both. Despotism and tyranny are almost impossible evils in our day, but the love of liberty is so great, that the important task now is to enlighten and to regulate that love, so that, in their headlong career for the attainment of a good, the people place not themselves in the way of the very evils they seek to avoid. They have to learn, that for nations as for individuals, happiness depends upon virtue and wisdom, and that therefore liberty, which is happiness, does not mean merely freedom from restraint, and cannot be attained through crimes.

There is not perhaps in history a more striking example of how incompatible liberty is with cor-

ruption, than that period of the French Revolution, the Reign of Terror, when every citizen\* in the state, without exception, had the right of voting, and was thus considered represented, and when the representatives of the people presented the most hideous assembly of vicious tyrants and despots which the world has ever witnessed.

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\* This word is here used in its usual acceptation, though nothing can be farther from the proper idea of the duties of citizenship, than the notions and practice of the French of that day.

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# HISTORY

## OF

# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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### CHAPTER I.

Introductory Sketch of the early History of France—Louis XIV.

EVERY one who has taken a view of the French Revolution of 1789, must have felt that deeds such as those it gave rise to, and national frenzy such as it gave evidence of, could only be the consequences of centuries of corruption; and every writer on these events has, therefore, sought in history to trace the causes that could produce such lamentable results.

Strange that though all have gone back to search for the origin of evil, none (or at least very few) have done so to search for that good, the departure from which must be the origin of evil, and the remnants of which must have been the principle of vitality, which prevented entire destruction. When societies are first formed by a number of individuals, renouncing some of their natural and individual rights in order the more securely to enjoy the rest, all men are in the same condition, and the regulations they enter into are consequently such as shall ensure the same benefits to all\*. But the very means for doing this, become the means for the few to benefit themselves at the expense of the many, and the liberty of the people, therefore, at later periods becomes dependent upon the degree of

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\* I do not mean to say that this is done deliberately and with full consciousness, but it is the result of existing circumstances, and probably also of those instincts of order and justice, of which man received the stamp upon his soul, when he was made in the image of God.

the primitive feeling of individual rights, harmonized with the good of all, which is still extant among them. The existence of this feeling must again be dependent upon the extent to which the institutions which were originally planned for the maintenance of liberty are kept up\*. But in our times it has been forgotten that liberty can only exist where a nation understands its own affairs, and that where this is the case, revolution is out of the question.

Since the French Revolution spread its pernicious doctrines in the world, the idea of liberty has, in almost all minds, been connected with change, and novelty, and revolution has become, as it were, the necessary and only means for the attainment of liberty. Simplicity and stability have not been thought of, as having the least connection with liberty; therefore has there been no searching for it in the ancient institutions of the nations, but in the theories and speculations of philosophers; as if freedom were an abstract idea, and not a state of being.

Some writers have sought for the causes of the French Revolution in the character of the people, which, according to them, has, throughout its history, evinced itself in the same way; that is, whenever the people of France has had any share of power, either legally or illegally obtained, the result has been anarchy and bloodshed. But this seems a very arbitrary and superficial way of deciding the matter, for though it must be admitted that races, as individuals, have inherent qualities and tendencies, still these qualities and tendencies can be modified and even destroyed by outward circumstances, and others be planted in their place. When races divide into

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\* There has never been a free nation which has not had in its natural constitution germs of liberty as ancient as itself; and nations have never efficaciously attempted to develop, by their fundamental written laws, other rights than those that existed in their natural constitution.—DE MAISTRE.

nations, these nations, though springing from the same source, then develop a different individuality, and it is probable that the minds of the founders and the first lawgivers of nations give their own individual stamp to the people. Certain it is, that the histories of France and England, two nations sprung from the same source, present a remarkable contrast. While in England the Teutonic race goes on for centuries, developing its admirable institutions according to the exigencies of the times, in France these institutions are deteriorated by intermixture with foreign alloy, and the spirit of the race changes. The struggles through which every nation has to pass in the progress of its developement, in England, under all their various forms, have always exhibited a decided tendency towards liberty, that is, towards the establishing and guaranteeing of the rights of all classes of the community; while in France these struggles have always been for power, for immunity from the burthens of the state, not for equal partition of them.

First, we have the immediate descendants of Clovis contending for universal power; then the mayors of the palace usurping the place of their masters, and aiming at even more extensive power and dominion. During this time the history of France presents a frightful picture of crimes, treason, invasions, and wars. But still a kind of superstitious reverence seemed attached to the person of the sovereign; a remnant, perhaps, of the spirit of those simple ages when men revered in their governors the representatives of their own unity, and the sanctity of their laws. However debased in power, the sovereign was allowed to retain his station, and when Pepin became ambitious of joining the dignity of monarch to the reality of power which he had long possessed, he was obliged to sanctify the deed by the approbation of the Pope, and the whole people.

His son, Charlemagne, found himself master of one

of the greatest empires of the world. This great monarch, one of those master-minds that seem to suffice for all things, and in whom was combined the conqueror and the legislator, that is, the destroyer and the builder, laid no sound foundation however to his edifice; he commenced that system of centralization, to which may, perhaps, be attributed the political incapacity of the *people* of France, who, losing by degrees even the traditions of that self-government which they had enjoyed in more barbarous ages, when they attained power knew not how to use it for the attainment of liberty; for though power in a monarch may destroy the liberty of the people, power, (or rather, freedom from restraint,) regained by that people, is not sufficient to re-establish liberty.

When under the feeble successors of Charlemagne, the power of the Sovereign again declined, it was not the people, but the subordinate lords of the state, who caught it as it fell from their hands; and while in England the feudal system introduced by the conquering nation, was by a powerful sovereign at once grafted on, and made to harmonize with the free institutions of his new subjects, in France it arose out of the weakness of the monarch, and became as it were the establishing of anarchy as a permanent system. Every petty lord became the sovereign despot in his own dominions. The difference between the king and his vassals was in dignity rather than in actual power.

From this time even the form of national assemblies, (which, a remnant of the ancient liberty of the Teutonic race, had been kept up until about seventy years after Charlemagne,) entirely disappeared, and the royal council then became composed only of barons, tenants in chief, prelates, and household officers. The great vassals of the crown acted for themselves in their own dominions, assisted by similar councils, and the kings had not the power of enforcing laws in the domains of their vassals. Whenever they were desi-

rous of making a general regulation they were obliged to enter into an agreement with their vassals for the purpose.

Every kind of misfortune, says a French historian, fell at once upon France. The throne and the altar, laws and truth, duties and religion, were all swallowed up in the gulf of anarchy. Individual interests struggling violently with the general interest, produced a monstrous mixture of the ruins of the ancient government and ancient discipline. The bishops, following the example of the temporal lords, shook off the yoke of obedience, and having made themselves dukes and counts, were engrossed by their ambitious plans, and the necessity of defending themselves by arms: considering their flocks, not as souls for which they were to answer before God, but as slaves upon whom they could trample as despots.

The degenerate descendants of Pepin and Charlemagne were in their turn succeeded by one of their vassals, Hugh Capet; who, by uniting to the crown domains several considerable fiefs, as well as by his personal qualities, again restored some of the ancient power of the crown: and thenceforward the sovereigns having regained a position, were constant in endeavours to extend their own power, and to curb that of their vassals. For this end they conferred privileges upon the towns. National assemblies, comprising the third estate, or the Commons, were again convoked, but so often abused and wasted the power thus given to them, that these assemblies frequently ended in bloodshed and riot.

Though these, as well as other free-sounding institutions, thenceforward appear regularly in the history of France, it is the power of the crown that goes on increasing, not the liberty of the people; and whenever comparative order and prosperity bless the land, it seems rather the free gift of the sovereign than the result of the comprehension of the citizens of

their rights, and of their exertions for the attainment of that which might ensure the enjoyment of them.

The earliest records we have of the parliaments of France do not reach beyond the twelfth century, in the reign of Louis VI. The parliament of Paris is generally considered the most ancient, though it is probable the other principalities had institutions of a similar kind, at a period almost as remote. This body was originally ambulatory, following the king's court wherever it went, until the reign of Philip le Bel at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when it became fixed at Paris. Since that time it was rarely removed, and that only on some very extraordinary occasions. Thenceforward it met at regular periods, twice in the year, until, under the reign of Charles VI., at the close of the same century, it became perpetual.

The parliament was considered chiefly as a judicial court, but it had other functions, which, as the royal authority gradually encroached upon its privileges, became of scarcely any importance\*.

As the judicial business increased, it was found necessary to admit lawyers into the parliament, who thence by degrees took a higher position. From the reign of St. Louis, in the middle of the thirteenth century, they began to form a powerful class in the community, being favoured by the kings, who wished by this new-created *noblesse de robe* to counterbalance the power of the *noblesse de l'épée*.

The most revolting acts of injustice under the forms of law, were, however, perpetrated in the reigns

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\* The most important privilege vested in the Parliament as a constitutional body, was the right to examine the laws presented to it by the king before registering them, which was one of its functions, and to protest against them in case they were not in accordance with the fundamental statutes of the realm. This right became an empty sound at a later period when the kings usurped the power of *forcing* the registering of their decrees in a bed of justice. Where is the human institution which can prevent a corrupt people from being enslaved?

of the successors of Louis IX., (St. Louis,) and the parliament was powerless to remedy the frightful evils under which the country was suffering.

Louis XI., with a firm hand and an indomitable will, but often by base means, re-established order and power in the empire; but his system was that of absolutism, and though the great were curbed, the people did not obtain more liberty.

In the assembly of the States-General, convoked in 1484, in the reign of Charles VIII., the Commons took a prominent part, and some burst of popular feeling might then have afforded a hope that the people were becoming better acquainted with their rights. Philip Pot, the deputy from Burgundy, made a very remarkable speech, in which were the germs of a republican spirit very unusual in those days. 'In the beginning,' said he, 'the sovereign people created kings by its suffrage. Princes are appointed not in order to enrich themselves at the expense of the people, but, forgetting their own interests, to enrich the state, and promote the public welfare. . . . I include in the term people, not merely the populace or only the subjects of the kingdom, but men of every class, even the princes\*.'

These fine principles, however, were perhaps merely declamatory words for him who uttered them, as well as for those who heard them; the nation, accustomed to be governed, was incapable of governing itself, and this convocation of the States-General ended without bringing any accession of liberty to the people.

During the next reign, that of Louis XII., the laws did not oppress, but protected the people, and the king sought out the ablest and best men to fill the courts, so that justice should be administered impartially; but nothing was done towards giving the nation constitutional rights. The long series of civil

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\* MASSELIN, LAVALLEÉ.

and religious wars which succeeded, and extended over the whole of the sixteenth century, exhausted the country and weakened the royal authority, but nothing had been gained for the liberty of the lower classes. When the reign of Henry IV. at length restored religious peace to the country, rigorous laws and heavy taxes still oppressed the people.

Louis XIII., or rather his minister Richelieu, who reigned in his name, destroyed the power and independence of the nobility, but the state of the people continued to be miserable, the finances were exhausted, and industry and commerce neglected. The active spirit of the nation, paralyzed by suffering, seemed only to revive for factious struggles.

The words of Mazarin addressed to the deputies of the parliament of Paris during the minority of Louis XIV., show what were the pretensions of the crown at that period. The parliament, the *chambre des comptes*, the *cour des aides*, and the *grand conseil*, had signed an *arrêt d'union*, which caused some anxiety to the minister, who having ordered the deputies of the parliament to appear before him, declared to them that the queen regent could not allow such *arrêts*. The magistrates answered, that there was nothing in this *arrêt* contrary to the service of the king. 'If the king,' replied Mazarin, 'did not choose that you should wear gold lace upon your collars, it would be necessary to discontinue wearing it, for it is not so much the thing forbidden, as it is the fact that it is forbidden, which constitutes the crime.'

The war of the Fronde, which was the result of this manifestation of arbitrary power, also proves that the spirit of the nobility was not yet broken, though it was on this occasion again obliged to submit to the superior power of the crown. At this time (1660,) peace was established throughout Europe. The Stuarts were again restored to the throne of Eng-



land, and monarchy was universally triumphant. It was a solemn epoch in the history of Europe. 'Royalty freed from its ancient shackles, became everywhere almost absolute. In France, in Spain, in the greater number of the States of the Germanic empire, it had subdued the feudal aristocracy, and ceased to protect the liberty of the commons, no longer having occasion to oppose them to other enemies. The nobility, (*la haute noblesse*,) as if it had lost the feeling of its defeat, pressed around the throne, almost proud of the renown of its conqueror. The middle classes, (*la bourgeoisie*,) scattered and of a timid spirit, while enjoying the growing order, and a welfare until then unknown, laboured to enrich and enlighten themselves, but as yet without aspiring to take part in the government of the state. Everywhere the pomp of the courts, the promptitude of the administration, proclaimed the preponderance of the royal power. The belief in the divine right and supremacy of kings was prevalent, and even but feebly resisted where it was not recognised. In short, the progress of civilization, of letters, of the arts of peace and internal prosperity, embellished this triumph of pure monarchy, inspired princes with presumptuous confidence, and the people with contentment, mixed with admiration\*.'

The moment in which Louis XIV. took the reins of government in his own hands, was the signal of this new era in the history of Europe.

Mazarin, like Richelieu, though he achieved great things, left the finances in a deplorable condition. No sooner, however, had Louis XIV. attained his majority, than he applied himself with all the vigour of his noble but ambitious character, to the laying the surest foundations for the glory of his name. The finances were improved, commerce and manufactures

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\* GUIZOT'S *Histoire de la Révolution d'Angleterre*, vol. i., p. 3.

encouraged, and the country rendered strong and respected without, and prosperous within. But even here the germ of evil was laid beside the germ of good, for Colbert forgot, in his zeal to place France on an equal footing with the first manufacturing countries of the world, that one class of a nation cannot with impunity be benefitted at the expense of another, and the restrictions placed upon the trade in corn, as well as other protective measures, through which an undue interference of government was exercised, did not fail to produce a future harvest of evil.

Louis XIV. commenced with an ardent desire for the happiness of his people, and he was indefatigable in attending to the affairs of the nation; but he wished to grasp all power, and was unwilling to delegate it to others. His ideas upon the rights and duties of kings were absolute in the extreme.

All historians from whom we obtain records of his reign, agree in representing Louis in this light; the following are said to be his ideas of the kingly character. 'The interests of the state should be his first consideration. To command others he must raise himself above them, and neither execute, nor order anything which may be unworthy of himself, of the position which he fills, nor of the dignity of the state. He who works for the state, works for himself, the welfare of the one constitutes the glory of the other. When the first is elevated, happy and powerful, he who is the cause of its prosperity, will be glorious\*.'

'The king represents the whole nation, all power resides in his hands, and there can be no other in the kingdom than that which he establishes. The nation has no vital power; in France it resides entirely in the person of the king†.'

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\* *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, ch. 28.

† *Manuscrit d'un Cour de Droit*, composed for the instruction of the Duke de Bourgogne, quoted by LEMONTEY, in his *Essai sur la Monarchie de Louis XIV.*, p. 15.

‘Kings are absolute lords, and have consequently the full and entire disposal of the property of the clergy as well as the laity\*.’

‘He who has given kings to the world has willed that they should be respected as His lieutenants, reserving to Himself the sole right of examining their conduct. It is His will that whoever is born a subject should obey blindly†.’

‘A king ought to decide for himself, because decision has need of a master spirit, and in cases where reason does not prompt him, he must yield to the instinct which God has put in all men, especially in kings‡.’

Louis XIV. did not long remain content with the glory of rendering his people happy. The mania of foreign conquest seized him, and a succession of glorious victories, followed by as great disasters, together with an inordinate love of pomp and magnificence, to which indeed France is indebted for some of its finest monuments, soon again reduced the people to a state of suffering; and though this reign is considered the most glorious period of French history, it was under cover of its brilliancy that the first seeds of the future Revolution were sown.

Towards the close of this reign the whole aspect of France was changed. The lands were lying waste, the provinces depopulated; the nation unquiet and discouraged; the government hated and despised. The finances were in a deplorable state, and no other resource left to restore them but a bankruptcy.

Further loans were out of the question. In order to raise eight millions (320,000*l.*) of ready money, the government signed bills for thirty-two millions (1,280,000*l.*). The whole debt now amounted to two thousand three hundred millions (92,000,000*l.*). The

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\* *Mémoire de Louis XIV.*, vol. ii., p. 121.

† *Idem*, p. 336.

‡ *Idem*, vol. i.

expenditure of 1715 was estimated at two hundred and five millions (8,200,000*l.*), while the revenue to meet it was only one hundred and seventy-five millions (7,000,000*l.*). Dark clouds hung over the destinies of France, and Louis, alone in his gorgeous palace, with his successor a child of five years old, pursued by dark and melancholy thoughts, gave himself up to Madame de Maintenon, and buried himself in religious devotions, which took a fanatic character from the influence of his confessor, Father Letellier, an austere and hard-hearted Jesuit, who had succeeded the excellent Father Lachaise, and who dishonoured the end of this reign by contemptible persecutions.

Louis XIV. like all despotic monarchs, detested all prominent individualities in the state, and the nobility, whose power and importance had been already so considerably diminished, dwindled under this reign, into mere minions of the court, and though they continued in the enjoyment of their privileges, they no longer formed a body in the state. On the other side, the middle classes (*bourgeoisie*) renewed their alliance with the crown; enriched by their industry and distinguished by their intelligence, they soon took possession of all those places which were formerly reserved for the nobility alone, and among them was gradually developed that new power—public opinion\*, which, ever varying and ever led, though ever with a false semblance of independence, became a mighty rival of the monarchs of Europe.

But of all the germs of the future Revolution none were so big with disastrous consequences as the dissensions between the Jansenists† and the Jesuits,

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\* It may be objected that public opinion must always have existed, but I use the word deliberately, as implying those vague theoretical and unhealthy speculations, on states and government, which have since then gone on augmenting to such a degree, in contradistinction to that judgment upon affairs, that watchfulness as to the acts of governments, which must always be salutary.

† The peculiar feature of Jansenism, and the one that has made it be

which, though originally a purely theological question, was soon embraced by the whole public, and Jesuit and Jansenist became the *noms de guerre* of the two factions that divided the state.

The cause of the Jesuits and that of the absolute power of the king, seemed in all minds to be intimately connected; whoever therefore hated the government hated the Jesuits, and took part with the Jansenists, who were thus made to represent the party of the opposition. It was not, however, that all those who embraced Molinism, or Jansenism, were at all anxious about grace or free will, (the points in dispute between the two religious parties,) but during those times when society was still earnestly religious, struggles for political interests wore the guise of theological discussions; and Louis XIV., who was profoundly ignorant in these matters, nevertheless, detested, with royal instinct, all that belonged to the Jansenists, because he found ranged under their banner all he had ever struggled against: the nobles, the magistracy, the liberties of the provinces, the remnants of the Fronde, and behind all these, the reformers. This party had grown with the faults and misfortunes of Louis XIV.; it had blamed the war of succession, it had blamed the peace of Utrecht; it censured all the acts of the government, it exaggerated the misery of the people; it accused the king of inertness, of cruelty, of cowardice; it said that he had entered into the order of the Jesuits, and that his confessor had made him take the oath of obedience.

It was a base opposition, working covertly, but it was the more alarming from its vagueness and mysteriousness; its presence being felt every where, even

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looked upon as more dangerous to the Roman Catholic Church than any of the schismatic churches, is, that though differing from the Church in certain doctrines, and though condemned and even anathematized by the Church for this difference, they nevertheless persisted in forcing themselves upon the Church and considering themselves as inseparable from it.

among the ministers, the court, and the clergy, it having been joined by a great party of the latter, the Benedictines, the Oratorians, and other learned religious bodies.

Its fall was determined at court, but no one at that time suspected that the struggle thus commenced, was to last fifty years, and was to be one of the principal causes of the ruin of the monarchy and of religion.

The growing strength of the Jansenists may, perhaps, have been greatly owing to the *ennui* which the court inspired, for the tastes of the courtiers had by no means changed with the tastes of the king. The semblance of austere manners and great devotion, was put on to please a king, who, fallen as he was in their eyes, was still the dispenser of favours, but the love of pleasure and frivolity was at the bottom of their hearts; and court and people awaited with equal impatience the death of their formerly idolized monarch.

No sooner had this event taken place than the contempt in which he was held was manifested by the setting aside of his will, in which he had determined that during the minority of his successor, the kingdom should be governed by a council of regency, headed by his legitimatized son, the Duke of Maine. The Duke of Orleans, supported by the parliament\* (gained over by the prospects of greater power held out to it by the

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\* The character of the magistrates of that day has been eloquently described by a contemporary writer, renowned for his strict impartiality: 'What magistrate of our day would interrupt his amusements, because, I will not say the peace of mind, but because the honour, or even the life of an unfortunate being was at stake? The title of magistrate is but too often a charter of idleness, bought on account of the honour it confers, and the functions exercised merely from *bienséance*. To ask a magistrate for justice, when he is intent upon amusing himself, is considered an insult and a proof of bad manners. Their amusements are the sacred part of their lives, which no one dares intrude upon; and they prefer to wear out the patience of an unfortunate client, and risk losing a good cause, to curtailing a few moments from their sleep, or breaking off a game of cards or a useless conversation.' FLÉCHIER, *Panegyrique de St. Louis*.

duke,) protested against this arrangement, as a violation of the constitution of the state, which enacted that supreme power should be vested in one alone, and as first prince of the blood he was named sole regent, in spite of the opposition of the Duke of Maine and his party.

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## CHAPTER II.

Regency—General depravity of the Court—State of the Finances—Fraudulent transactions—Infamous measures—System of Law—Brilliant prospects—Reverse of the picture—Dubois—Death of the Duke of Orleans—His rule a disastrous period for France—French Literature—Voltaire—Duke de Bourbon—Fleury—Bull Unigenitus—Parliament exiled—Stanislas—Treaty of Vienna.

IMMEDIATELY on the Duke of Orleans being named regent a violent reaction took place. The parliament having been called in to pronounce upon the last will of the monarch who had so long held it in subjection, hoped to regain some power; and the nobles hastened again to take the precedency of that class, which the protection of Louis XIV. had alone enabled to maintain its position. The mask of hypocrisy was thrown aside, and the courtiers vied with one another in surpassing their master in every species of vice. The corruption of morals which had hitherto been the infamous distinction of the court, was now spread through all classes, for the jovial ease and familiarity of the regent was imitated by his worthy disciples, and no roof was too humble, no home too sacred, no den of vice too low for them to make it the scene of their debauchery.

The external policy of France during the regency, directed by the execrable Dubois, who found it more advantageous to serve the enemies of his country than to attend to its interests, was of a nature still further to add to the national degradation, and, as if no species of demoralization should be left untried during this disgraceful period of French history, the financial measures which were resorted to were of the most iniquitous character.

The greatest difficulties which Louis XIV. had bequeathed to his successor resided in the state of the finances. The expenditure was rated at two hundred



and forty-three millions of francs (9,720,000*l.*), the revenue did not exceed a hundred and eighty-six millions (7,440,000*l.*), two years of which had been expended in advance, and bills amounting to seven hundred and forty-three millions (29,720,000*l.*), were due, besides eighty-six millions (3,440,000*l.*), of the rents de l'Hôtel de Ville. The poverty of the people was equal to the poverty of the royal treasury, and the only new taxes which could possibly be levied must therefore of necessity have been imposed upon the property of the nobles and the clergy. But the regent dared not brave the resistance he was sure to meet with in this quarter, and several palliatives were therefore suggested.

Instigated by his hatred of the financiers, the austere St. Simon proposed to convoke the States-General and to declare a national bankruptcy, but this plan was resisted by the Duke de Noailles, and rejected by the regent from fear of the States-General, not from any feeling of honour, for he did not shrink from adopting in the midst of peace, the fraudulent measures, to which Louis XIV. had had recourse, to save France from dismemberment. He suppressed a great number of offices which had been previously created, without reimbursing the sums for which they had been bought. He remelted and debased the coin of the realm, but did not gain by this operation more than seventy millions (2,800,000*l.*), because the re-coinage was partly performed out of the country; he revised the whole of the standing debt, and reduced it to two hundred and fifty millions (10,000,000*l.*), which he liquidated by an issue of government bonds (*billets d'état*), bearing interest of four per cent.; he diminished the interest on a part of the *rentes* of the Hôtel de Ville; and lastly, he created tribunals, called *chambres ardentes*, to examine into the frauds and illicit gains of the farmers-general. These tribunals were surrounded by circumstances of terror and tyranny, which contrasted strangely with

the usual good-natured weakness of the regent's character. The names of four hundred and sixty fathers of families were placed on the lists for proscription, and the most abominable means were resorted to, in order to swell their number. Informers received rich rewards; servants were encouraged to denounce their masters under borrowed names; those who attempted to censure the denouncers were punished with death; spies were placed upon the *financiers* in their own houses, and the inquiries instituted went as far back as 1688. The greatest consternation reigned amongst the *financiers*; many of them committed suicide, others fled from the country; the prisons were filled; luxury began to disappear; capital lay dormant; and industry and commerce ceased. The people, who at first applauded the persecutions directed against those whom they with true instinct looked upon as enemies, began to murmur when several *financiers* were sent to the galleys, and one condemned to death. At length the persecuted in their despair had recourse to the courtiers, buying their intercession and interest in obtaining a diminution of the burthens laid upon them. The *noblesse*, for the sake of gain, willingly lent themselves to this baseness. The ladies of the court made a traffic of their influence. The members of the *chambre ardente* dishonoured themselves by their venality. The public exulted at the ability shown by the farmers-general in parrying the attacks directed against them, and punished with songs and *bon-mots* the baseness and the cupidity of their protectors.

Thus was the government again defrauded of treasure by means of the immorality it had itself contributed to disseminate. Out of two hundred and twenty millions (8,800,000*l.*), which it was calculated would be raised by these arbitrary taxes, only fifteen millions (600,000*l.*) found their way into the treasury; government bonds (*billets d'état*) fell eighty per cent. in value, and the public credit was entirely destroyed.

These measures were followed by that unequalled system of fraud, known by the name of its inventor, Law\*.

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\* John Law, born about 1681, was a native of Edinburgh; in early life he showed great talents, and was in consequence employed to arrange the revenue and accounts of Scotland, which occupation, no doubt, gave a bias to his mind in favour of financial schemes. Through his persuasion the first public bank of circulation in Paris was established by the regent in 1716, and its management was entrusted to the projector. This bank obtained the privilege for twenty years for issuing notes, which however, were exchangeable on demand for coin of the realm.

The public debt at this time amounted to one thousand five hundred millions (80,000,000*l.*), and was at from sixty to seventy per cent. discount. Law's bank was formed with the view of paying off this debt, by giving the public creditor the option of subscribing for bank shares and paying for the same in the public stock at par. As an inducement for purchasing these bank shares, the Mississippi Company was formed with a capital of one hundred millions (4,000,000*l.*) and joined to the bank. This company purchased the patent which had been granted to the Sieur Crozat in 1712, giving possession of the country of the Mississippi under the name of Louisiana. The sole right of trading to that quarter for twenty-five years was vested in the company. Many other advantages were given to the bank and the company in the form of privileges and monopolies; still it was a long time before all the number of shares were subscribed for. In 1719, the French East India Company and the Senegal Company were both incorporated with the Mississippi Company, which in consequence then enjoyed the monopoly of the trade of France. Such advantages soon began to operate upon public opinion, and crowds rushed forward to make investments in the stock of the company, so that in August of 1719, its price was driven up to five hundred per cent. In this month the general farm of all the public revenues of the country was granted to the company, all of whose privileges were by the same *arrêt* prolonged to the year 1770. In consideration of these concessions the company agreed to advance to the government, for paying off the public debt, one thousand two hundred millions (48,000,000*l.*) at three per cent. A further sum of fifty millions (2,000,000*l.*) was paid by the company for the exclusive privilege of coining during nine years. In a few weeks the stock rose in price to one thousand two hundred per cent., when one hundred and fifty millions (6,000,000*l.*) were added to the capital by fresh subscriptions at one thousand per cent., and this new capital was divided into very small shares, so that its purchase might be within the reach of a still larger class. By this means the company was enabled to lend to the government an additional sum of three hundred millions (10,000,000*l.*) at three per cent. In the midst of all this speculation, the bank had issued notes to the amount of one thousand millions (40,000,000*l.*), and the abundance of money began to work very injurious effects. From November, 1719, to the following April, the price of Mississippi Stock continued to rise until it reached two thousand and fifty per cent. The immense circulation of money however produced a reaction, the stock fell, and bank notes became depreciated in value. Many expedients were practised by Law to prevent this downward movement. A forced and fictitious value was given to the paper money, and much

There are moments of madness among nations, and no people have experienced this oftener than the French, who are fickle, sanguine, and full of ardour for everything new. One of these dangerous periods had now arrived. It was long since glory had been the passion of the nation. Upon matters of religion, calmness even to indifference prevailed. Since the time of the *Fronde*, none sighed any longer for liberty. The last traces of the spirit of chivalry were effaced; nothing but pleasure was now desired, and the unbridled love of pleasure awakened cupidity. All schemes for the gratification of this passion, which was now become an epidemic, were readily embraced; and Law's system was well calculated to lay hold of the imagination of those who understood nothing of it, but that it promised immense profits. Ignorance in matters of finance was very great in France; all the science of the capitalists consisted in lending out their money at usurious interest.

The projects of this man were dazzling and imposing to those who could not investigate them and discover the unsoundness of their foundation. All rushed forward to reap the golden harvest. The shares in his bank, and other companies which he formed, rose to an enormous price. Those whom Law had at first allured by his brilliant promises, employed the activity of their minds in enticing others. The story of these plausible schemes flew from mouth to mouth, and he who showed himself incredulous must have been gifted with no common courage. The fabrication of paper required for issue would have been found too slow, though the number of workmen and clerks engaged in preparing it, had been doubled and qua-

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injustice and tyranny was practised. To put a stop to these evils, the regent had recourse to a measure still more pernicious and iniquitous; he issued an *arrêt* reducing the stock and the bank notes to half of their nominal value. The ruin of the whole was soon accomplished after this step.

drupled. The inhabitants of the provinces looked with an envious eye upon the good fortune which seemed to smile upon the Parisians. They flocked to the capital; never before was there so great a concourse in Paris, excitement so general, luxury so extravagant. This ferment continued to increase from 1716 to 1720, till at length the issue of paper money, or bills circulated as money, became so enormous, that the prices of all commodities rose exorbitantly, and land was sold at fifty years' purchase. Those capitalists who were large holders of notes realized their fortunes by the purchase of land, and thus so large a quantity of notes were thrown into the market that they began to fall in value. An *arrêt* appeared reducing the nominal value of the notes to one half, but they could now no longer be circulated at more than a tenth of their value. Then another *arrêt* was sent forth revoking the first. Many other arbitrary edicts were issued in the course of a month, but confidence could not be restored, and the bubble burst. This great financial *bouleversement* augmented the distress of the treasury, and destroyed public credit; depraved the higher classes still more, and excited many bad passions; but on the other hand it gave an impulse to commerce, and did not, in fact, impoverish France as a country. The capital remained, though distress was brought to individuals by change of property. 'History,' says Lemontey, 'ought to signalize this epoch as a most remarkable point of difference in the progress of the rulers and the ruled; a point, whence the people always advancing in intelligence and wealth, and their chiefs constantly retrograding with their prejudices and their timidity, prepared frightful convulsions for both parties.'

As if nothing sacred should be left unprofaned during this reign, Dubois, the master of Philip of Orleans in all those infamous vices in which he proved himself so great a proficient, was decorated with the

purple of the church. He was first appointed Archbishop of Cambrai, and no murmurs of discontent were heard, when the See which the reverend Fenelon had occupied, was desecrated by this monster. No means were then spared to obtain for him the cardinal's hat. The two rivals, George I. and James Stuart, were interested in his favour, and we need not add that this could not have been by fair means. The consent of the Emperor of Germany and the King of Spain was gained, eight millions of francs were expended at Rome, and Dubois at length gave himself up entirely to the Jesuits. The dissensions about the bull *Unigenitus*\* continued. Several bishops, as well as the university, had appealed to a future council of the church against this bull, and the regent was therefore much embarrassed, when Dubois, whose power over him was unlimited, urged him to abandon the Jansenists. By dint of intimidation the parliament was made to record the bull without any modifications, and it thus became the law of the state and of the church (1720).

Notwithstanding, however, this great service rendered to the papal see, Clement XI. refused to name Dubois cardinal, but, at his death, which ensued

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\* So called from its opening words, "*Unigenitus Dei Filius*." It was issued by Clement XI. in 1713, condemning a hundred and one propositions in a devotional work, written by *Père Quesnel*. This book had been universally read during a period of forty years, and great astonishment was excited in the Christian world by this bull of condemnation, since the greater part of the propositions which were thus condemned, seemed to be orthodox. But Quesnel was a Jansenist, and the previous note upon this sect will throw some light upon the matter. A great clamour was raised against the bull in France; the parliament would for a length of time not enregister it except with modifications. Louis XIV., under the influence of the Jesuits, considered this opposition as a revolt, and it is asserted that no less than 30,000 *lettres de cachet* were issued in consequence of it. But the persecuted Jansenists on their side did not spare their enemies, and among other weapons used ridicule; as a proof of Louis XIV.'s hatred of Jansenism, it was said, that a courtier, having asked a favour for his brother, the king replied that that brother was suspected of being a Jansenist, to which the courtier gave in answer, 'Sire, what calumny! I can assure your Majesty that my brother is an atheist.' The king replied in a reassured tone, 'Ah, that is a different thing!'

shortly after, the French faction in the conclave promised its support to Cardinal Conti, upon condition of his fulfilling the wishes of the ambitious upstart. Conti was weak enough to yield, but very soon after died, it is said, in consequence of the remorse he felt at having profaned the sanctity of religion, by thus throwing its mantle over everything that was hideous in vice.

Soon after the king's attaining his majority, the Duke of Orleans, who dared not immediately exchange his title of regent for that of minister, had his favourite nominated to this post, but death soon put a stop to his administration, which was not wanting in vigour and activity. He was succeeded as minister by the Duke of Orleans, who, however, survived him only a few months. The lampoon placed on the tomb of the indolent mother of this prince is one among the many instances of the contempt in which his memory was held. 'Here lies Idleness—the mother of all the vices.'

The eight years of the government of the regent had a fatal influence on the future destinies of France. He corrupted the morals of the nation by his example, destroyed the finances of the state by disastrous experiments, betrayed the interests of France to England, and brought the church into disrepute by placing a monster of vice on the steps of the altar. Only one part of his conduct can be passed without censure; he treated the young king with invariable tenderness and respect, and exerted himself to instil into his mind sound political views, and even instructed him himself in several branches of the science of government, which, from culpable negligence, not from incapacity, he had failed to practise during his own regency.

The amends he might thus have made to France for the disasters he had brought upon the country, were, counteracted by the king's preceptor, Villeroi, who was in the habit of taking his royal pupil to the

window, and, pointing out to him the crowd assembled below, told him that the thousands that he saw there were his property to do with as he liked; a lesson which was better suited to the degenerate mind of Louis XV., who, totally indifferent to the welfare of the millions over whom he was appointed to watch, spent their substance on his own vile pleasures, while he led the monarchy on to its ruin.

The social state of the eighteenth century arising out of feudal manners, and having nothing in it which was feudal, except recollections, forms, and broken fragments, was a state of society the foundations of which existed no longer; it was in discord with ideas, and was governed less by institutions than by customs. The death-blow having been given to the feudal system, the next task was to clear away the rubbish which impeded the march of intellect, to annihilate the world of the middle ages, and to lay the foundations of a new world. Society in the middle ages being the work entirely of Christianity, and that having been the principal instrument which demolished the ancient world, Christianity was considered by the new philosophy as the symbol and the cause of barbarism; as the enemy, the defeat of which was to draw with it all remains of the feudal system, and begin the era of modern civilization.

The ruin of Christianity was then the end of the philosophy of the eighteenth century; but this work of attempted destruction presents three distinct periods: that of Epicurean deism, and of scientific reform, preached by Voltaire; that of the atheism of Diderot, and of the political reform of Montesquieu; and that of the re-action of ideality, and of the democratic efforts of Rousseau.

Until this epoch philosophical literature was limited to licentious tales, satirical verses, and declamatory pamphlets. The *esprits forts* had not put forward their scepticism except in Bayle's *Dictionary*, an



immense arsenal of erudition, and of dialectics, against religion, the scholiasts, and the middle ages. The spirit of investigation now became active in analysing, experimenting on and dissolving everything. Philosophy, licentious and correctional, Epicurean and philanthropical, issued for the first time from the schools, showed itself abroad, and pretended to regenerate mankind. The taste for political studies spread. Questions relative to the social state, to morals, to the institutions of the people, occupied all thinking minds. Sciences of which even the names did not exist before, political economy, and statistics, now arose. Literature, invaded by the exact sciences and by philosophy, became occupied more with ideas than with words, and desired before all, to instruct, reform, and put forth doctrines. France was a great tribune to which all Europe listened, while discourses were held on man, his nature, his rights, his interests; and whence Voltaire, become the representative and the great master of his age, propagated his ideas of destruction, with a satanic energy, by his sententious tragedies, his innumerable letters, his satirical pamphlets, and above all, by his historical works, in which his profound intelligence of the past is continually falsified by his hatred against the middle ages\*.

The Duke of Orleans was succeeded in the ministry by the Duke of Bourbon, a weak and profligate fool, who was entirely governed by his wicked mistress, the Marquise de Prie. His administration only lasted three years, and was distinguished by no other event than the breaking off of the intended marriage between the king and an Infant of Spain, in consequence of an intrigue of Madame de Prie, in which, says Lacrételle, 'all the vices conspired in favour of virtue,' if indeed the splendour of the crown of France can be considered a compensation for all the

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\* LAVALLÉE.

bitter humiliations which were the lot of the virtuous Maria Leczinski, as the wife of the vulgar debauchee with whom she shared this splendour.

The power which the Duke of Bourbon and his mistress had hoped to ensure to themselves by placing a *protégée* of their own upon the throne, was, nevertheless, soon wrested from them, in consequence of a very rigorous edict against the Protestants, which exasperated the so-called philosophers of the day; while a tax of one-fiftieth imposed upon all landed property of the nobility and clergy, enlisted the privileged classes against them; and a scarcity of food, in which it was thought they speculated for their own gain, made the populace rise, and occasioned some bloodshed.

The king's preceptor, Fleury, though of a very advanced age, now took the reins of government, and an administration of economy, industry, and probity, ensured a calm of some duration, in which the country began to revive. The finances were no longer given over to courtiers and stock-brokers—the variations in the monetary system ceased; the *tailles* were diminished, and the tax of one-fiftieth discontinued. The general receipts amounted to a hundred and forty millions (5,600,000*l.*), which were really paid into the treasury, and the credit of the state was respected. In consequence of the good faith which the minister showed in all transactions he was enabled without much difficulty to raise a loan of eighteen millions (720,000*l.*)

This period of calm was again disturbed by dissensions about the bull *Unigenitus*, which though seemingly of little importance now, at that period contributed greatly to bring the government into discredit, and to prepare the field for incredulity. Fleury, who was an adherent of the Jesuits, allowed new persecutions to be directed against the Jansenists, several magistrates were exiled, a bishop was imprisoned, and

several doctors excluded from the University of Paris. The king held a bed of justice\*, and the bull was again enregistered without modifications. The parliament protested in an *arrêt*, which went even farther than the articles of 1682. The *arrêt* was annulled, and the king forbade the parliament to deliberate on public matters. The magistrates protested against this royal prohibition by ceasing to exercise their legal functions, and to administer justice, in consequence of which they were exiled but again recalled, when they assumed a semblance of submission, and the dissensions recommenced, without leading to any other result than to scandalise all minds; the unbelievers alone profited by the ridicule that fell upon both parties.

The death of Augustus II., king of Poland, in 1733, presented an excellent opportunity for France to stand forward in support of that country, which had already been marked out by its neighbours, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, for destruction. The Poles, who by their internal factions had given rise to the culpable hopes of these neighbours, seeing the dangers by which they were threatened, sought to avert them by choosing for themselves a national king. The diet bound itself by oath never to elect a foreign prince; all minds turned toward Stanislas Leczinski, father of the Queen of France, and the support of that country was solicited. But Cardinal Fleury did not sufficiently comprehend the future to be aware of the opportunity which thus presented itself of putting a stop to the progress of Russia, and when Stanislas was elected king by an

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\* *Lit de Justice.* The king on such occasions proceeded to parliament with greater pomp and ceremonious state than on ordinary royal sittings. Under these circumstances, announcing that he was holding a bed of justice—it was considered the law that his order to register could no longer be disobeyed. No discussions were allowed, obedience only was required. The king had the power of banishing the whole parliament, in case of its being refractory, and this prerogative was frequently exercised during the last two centuries, the members being sent to some town fifty or sixty miles from Paris.

immense majority, the means provided for him by France were so inefficient, that a despicable minority, gained over by the gold of the enemies of their country, were enabled to make a counter election under the protection of foreign bayonets. Stanislas was obliged to fly from Warsaw, and the small French force sent to his assistance was destroyed by the Russians.

Though Fleury did not comprehend the policy marked out for France with regard to Russia, he did not misunderstand the national policy with regard to Austria, and availed himself of the war to wrest some advantages from this ancient enemy of France. His measures were in this case so well taken, and the French generals carried on matters so successfully, that the epoch of the treaty of Vienna (1735), which concluded this war, is considered the only glorious moment of the reign of Louis XV.

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## CHAPTER III.

War—Madame de Pompadour—The *Savans*—Schools of Philosophy—The Noblesse—The Clergy—The People—The Middle Classes—The Jansenists—Contests between the Parliament and the Archbishop of Paris—Interference of the King—War with England in North America.

THE war which soon after broke out between England and Spain, wherein France took a prominent part without any definite object, and carried it on at an immense expense of men and treasures, was concluded by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, where Louis, though in a position at the moment to stipulate for some indemnities for the 500,000 men that had been sacrificed, for the ruined navy, and for twelve hundred millions (48,000,000*l.*) added to the national debt, chose to renounce every advantage for France, saying that he would treat as a king, and not as a shopkeeper; concealing under these absurd words his desire to conclude a war which swallowed up the sums which he would rather squander upon his infamous pleasures.

This conduct was dictated to Louis by his then reigning mistress, the Marquise de Pompadour, who had succeeded to the last of the five sisters de Nesle, who had each in their turn enjoyed this disgraceful distinction. Madame de Pompadour, a woman of low birth, but of great beauty and brilliant education, aided by some natural abilities, was not satisfied with the title of the king's mistress, (though such was the state of morality in the court of France, that this position was envied by the first ladies of the realm,) but she aimed at being a state personage, and she did really for fifteen years enjoy all the power of a minister of state. The court was seduced by her entertainments and her prodigality; the literary men, particularly Voltaire, were gained by pensions and by flattery; and the public were won over by an

affectation of benevolence, charity, and a mock air of philosophy and highmindedness. Louis XV. enjoyed the only happiness his degenerate soul was capable of appreciating; he was left in peace in his private apartments, where he led a life of indolence and profligacy, surrounded by a few favourite courtiers, and relieved of the care and the pomp of royalty. Madame de Pompadour, indifferent to the affections of the king, though anxious to maintain a post so flattering to her ambition, devised means to attain her object, the infamy of which has happily never been equalled. She instituted the *Parc au cerf*, of infamous notoriety, where, while she pandered to the base appetites of the royal libertine, she systematically degraded and demoralized her own sex.

A government sunk into such depths of immorality was but too favourable for the progress of social dissolution, and attacks against religion began to assume a most alarming character.

All minds were in a state of ferment. The different bodies disputed the direction of the most important affairs of state; the contest lay principally between the parliament and the clergy. All aspired to authority, while the monarch allowed his to decline; all were in movement, while he remained inactive. The disputes of the priesthood and the magistracy became so furious that a civil and religious war was to be feared. Some few statesmen, who desired to maintain peace; worldly people, who feared to be interrupted in the midst of their pleasures; and, lastly, the sincerely pious, who disavowed, in the name of religion, those excesses of which they were made the pretext, called on the men of letters to calm this violent commotion. These last joined together to stifle, with the subject of dispute, the horrors of fanaticism which threatened to re-appear; but they worked for this end by different means. Several among them wished to bring about a complete indifference to religion; others directed

the minds of men to the observation of nature; while some proposed for their examination the highest thoughts on social order. Among these were some of great learning and of ardent character, endowed with that perseverance necessary for great undertakings, and with that ability which makes them successful. They loved novelty either from the impulse of native genius or from the desire of celebrity, which was their ruling passion\*. Voltaire continued to undermine the social edifice, led on as it would seem by the mere love of destruction; but though he continued to be the first power in the literature of that day, his writings, devoid of all political ideas, no longer satisfied the ardour of the public, not only intent upon destruction, but also upon reform, and three new schools were established in accordance with the wants and desires of the times. These were Montesquieu's political school, Quesnay's school of political economy, and the school of materialism represented by the *Encyclopédie*.

Montesquieu was the first of the philosophical reformers who attempted to mark out a theory of government in conformity with their ideas, and when his *Esprit des Lois* appeared in 1748, this first dogmatical work on institutions was received with enthusiasm, though, compared to the irreligious boldness of other works of the day, it must have appeared very moderate. This very moderation, however, ensured its success, for it was not only the reformers who found in it a wide field for speculation, but all the statesmen of Europe were proud of proclaiming themselves his disciples.

The economists, headed by Quesnay, directed their efforts for reform towards the science of administration, found in the vices of the existing system, the fountain from which flowed all the miseries of France,

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\* LACRETELLE.

and based upon the ameliorations they proposed making, the brightest hopes of future prosperity. Quesnay considered agriculture as the source of all wealth, and declaimed against the government which pressed upon the farmer and the proprietor in many different ways; he combated the existing mercantile system with its protections and prohibitions, and claimed entire liberty of commerce, particularly in corn; he wished to reduce all imposts to one tax upon the net produce of land. Though this school did not enjoy as great popularity as the less practical ones, which allowed greater scope for the imagination, the effects of the principles it advocated were more immediately felt, and France was indebted to its efforts for the famous edict of 1754, which took off all restrictions on the trade in corn.

The *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique*, which is generally considered the great cauldron wherein was concocted all the poisonous ingredients which, during the revolution of 1789, spread a moral pestilence over the world, owed its origin to Diderot and D'Alembert, the chiefs of the school of materialism, which denied the existence of everything which did not come under the cognizance of the senses,—of everything the existence of which cannot be mathematically demonstrated; in one word, the existence of the soul, and of the Deity, but nevertheless maintained the perfectibility of human nature. It was their zeal for the propagation of this last idea which gave rise to the *Encyclopédie*, that immense repository of human knowledge, begun in 1751, 'which was meant to be a vast engine of war against religion, which was in reality but a tower of Babel, to which all minds, even those of the most contradictory characters, brought their stone\*.'

While the work of social destruction was progress-

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\* LAVALLÉE.



ing, the government, though too weak to venture upon any open acts of despotism, permitted the most arbitrary systems to be carried on in every branch of administration. The king, who maintained an external appearance of religious devotion in the midst of his licentious pleasures, expressed himself loudly against all innovations; but though he foresaw the future catastrophe, he troubled himself very little about it, consoling himself with the words: '*After us the deluge.*' His mistress, his courtiers, and even his ministers, not only regarded the progress of the philosophers as harmless, but were themselves imbued with their doctrines, and the resistance of the government to the growth of incredulity was weak and undecided, while by administrative measures, it openly favoured its progress and undermined the power of the church. It supported the Jesuits, yet it forbade the establishment of any new convents or monasteries, without the royal consent. An edict was promulgated (1749), which deprived the clergy of the right of acquiring new property; propositions were made to substitute a regular tax upon church property, for the usual *don gratuit* of the clergy. In a word, the government, though affecting to despise public opinion, was led entirely by it, but at the same time it sought in no way to meet the salutary reforms that were called for. The imposts were augmented, the privileges of the *pays des états* were suppressed without resistance, every abuse was continued, and nothing worthy of commendation was established. The nobility generally, particularly the *noblesse de cour*, far from considering themselves threatened by the philosophical ideas which were spreading so fast, on the contrary adopted these notions themselves, not from conviction, or with any view of carrying them out into practice, but from a frivolous love of novelty and notoriety, and particularly because the epicurean doctrines of Voltaire favoured their licentious manners. Though

some of the nobles showed so much alarm at the spreading of the new doctrine, that according to Duclos, 'they feared the philosophers as thieves feared the lamp-post,' it was nevertheless the fashion to patronize even the most unscrupulous among the atheists, and to associate with them on a footing of perfect equality, in spite of the great distinction which was even then made between the nobles and the *roturiers*, to which class a great many of the literary men belonged. But the nobility of that day cannot be better characterized than by saying that it imitated all the vices of the king\*.

The clergy, wavering between intolerance and frivolity, wishing to put a stop to the spreading of the opinions of the day, yet too frequently adopting the morals of the times, invoking against scepticism, the despised severity of a corrupt power, instead of combating it with knowledge and capacity—the clergy, and particularly the high clergy, remained weak, and were defeated on all sides in the midst of the general movement. They had no replies to give to Voltaire's falsehoods, sarcasms, and false erudition; they scarcely ventured to emit a few feeble apologies, or some ineffective charges drawn up without skill or power. They were much more anxious to preserve their riches, than to proclaim their crucified God; being incapable of any longer guiding the human mind, they began to quail before it, and trembling, called upon it to stop. The dogmas of evangelical morality were no longer heard from the pulpit, for the clergy sought forgiveness for their holy mission, by a display of worldly complacency. Faith was replaced by common morality, charity by social justice, the laws of God by the rights of the people. The sanctuary was abandoned.

After contemplating the condition of this royalty,

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\* VILLEMAIN, LAVALLÉE.

so inert and degraded—of this noblesse, so vicious and tending towards social dissolution—of this clergy, without virtue, without zeal, and without learning; let us see what part those sections of the nation played upon whom all the social inequalities pressed so heavily. The lower classes, both in town and country, were brutal, ignorant, and miserable; more miserable in some respects than they had been in the middle ages. Industry was shackled by the corporations, the apprenticeships, the system of oaths; all this legislation of Colbert became an intolerable combination of petty tyrannies. Agriculture was oppressed by feudal service, tithes, forced labour, right of chase, and a crowd of absurd privileges enjoyed by the nobility. The working classes had preserved their religious faith, because they were under the influence of only the poor and evangelical part of the clergy. They detested the great landed proprietors (*seigneurs*), because they found in them their immediate and constant tyrants; they had not any affection for the government, in which they saw nothing but insatiable and merciless tax-gatherers, a despotic police, a luxurious and corrupt court, and a debauched king. Philosophical ideas had not penetrated as far as the multitude, but they had nevertheless a sort of instinctive desire for social renovation, which resolved itself, according to their view, in the abolition of all privileges.

The middle classes (*la bourgeoisie*) had never been so active, so rich, so enlightened; it was those classes who formed public opinion, and who were the strength of the state. They equalled the *noblesse* in fortune and in style of living, and surpassed the clergy in education; they possessed the social virtues in a much higher degree than these two classes, yet they were not permitted to attain to superior rank in the army, nor to ecclesiastical dignities, nor to high offices in the administration: almost all the weight of

the taxes fell upon them; it was they who had the most to suffer from the tyranny of the ministers, from the vengeance of the courtiers, from the iniquity of the police. These classes were full of ardour in embracing the new opinions called philosophical, full of confidence in their own strength, and of faith in the future. Beholding the highest ranks of society revelling in the depths of sin, and parading with effrontery all their coarse depravity before the eyes of the public, feeling that those in authority did less for them in proportion as their strength and their desires increased; they began to think that it belonged to them to take affairs into their own hands; and already they meditated on the necessity of calling at the same time on the crown for liberty, on the aristocracy for equality, and on the clergy for the rights of the human intellect\*.

Just as the antagonism against the higher classes was revealing itself, and gradually gaining strength, the contests between these classes, contests which had hitherto formed a prominent feature in French history, had ceased. This was the necessary consequence of their common decay. The aristocracy and the clergy, submissive to the throne, protected it by the sword and the censer, in return for its defence of their privileges. These three parties, reconciled to each other, entered into an intimate and mutual alliance for maintaining all existing things, whether just or unjust, by all and any means whatever—an imprudent alliance, at least on the part of the clergy, and of the throne, whose conversion rather than whose ruin the people desired, and which hastened their common destruction.

The state of public feeling towards the middle of the eighteenth century, seemed to threaten an approaching war between the people and the ruling powers. But the people had not yet concentrated all their strength and all their hatred; the ruling powers had not yet heaped

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\* GUIZOT.

up the measure of their iniquities. The clergy were yet to complete their fall by miserable disputes, through which the two parties dividing society, the Jesuits and the Jansenists, would be destroyed.

In the mean time disputes continued between the clergy and the Jansenists, whose only adherents were now to be found in the parliaments, and the measures which were taken finally to put them down, were unfortunately of a nature still farther to aggravate the evils to which these dissensions had given rise.

According to orders received from the archbishop, the curates of Paris refused to administer the last sacrament to those who could not present a *billet de confession*, signed by a Molinist priest (1752). Upon learning this, the parliament interfered in a most intemperate manner, ordered a curate who had acted in conformity to the orders of his superior, to be arrested, declared that the bull was not an article of faith, and forbade the clergy to refuse the sacrament. The latter, however, persisted, and the parliament then had recourse to military force, and had the sacrament administered in the midst of their bayonets. It is easily conceived what must have been the effects of such scandalous scenes, on a sceptical and demoralized public. A mixture of fanaticism and impiety, rage and ridicule, produced a most deplorable state of anarchy, which was fast dissolving the social body. The court wavered between the two parties; the ministers were ranged upon different sides. At last the parliament seized upon the property of the Archbishop of Paris, remonstrated vigorously against the ministerial despotism, which supported the clergy, and declared that it would remain sitting until it had obtained justice. In consequence of these measures the whole parliament was exiled (1753), and a *chambre provisoire* was created to administer justice; public opinion, however, was so opposed to this chamber, that the parliament was soon recalled, but at the same time all discussions on

religious subjects were forbidden by order of the king, who was disagreeably disturbed in his pleasures by these dissensions.

The clergy, however, soon recommenced the disputes; the court then declared itself in favour of the parliament, and the Archbishop of Paris was in his turn exiled. But in the exultation of victory, the parliament forgot moderation; it suppressed a very indulgent *brief* of Benedict XIV., who had endeavoured to put a stop to the dissensions; it openly attacked the bull that had been declared the law of the state, and insisted upon uniting itself with the other parliaments of the kingdom, which should thus form a kind of confederacy; refused to enregister the taxes, and aimed at arrogating to itself the power of the States-General.

The king, incited by the clergy, determined to put down the refractory magistrates in a most decided manner, and for that end held a bed of justice, wherein all the steps taken by the parliament were declared illegal, and this body was prohibited for the future from interfering in these matters.

The *chambre des enquêtes* was suppressed, the organization of the other chambers altered, and whoever dared to stray from the duties imposed upon them, were threatened with the royal displeasure. Upon this one hundred and fifty members of the parliament tendered their resignation. Paris was in a ferment, and ready to revolt at the slightest word from the magistrates, for though the parliament, as well as all the other bodies in the state, was thoroughly demoralized, and had swerved entirely from its original intention, it was identified by the people with the cause of resistance to the royal power, and therefore looked upon as one of the guardians of their liberties. Its disgrace was considered a public calamity, and full vent was given to the feelings of disgust and execration with which the king was regarded.

In the mean time war had broken out between

England and France in North America, and was soon succeeded by the seven years' war, during which the king and the nobility of France forfeited their last claims to the esteem of the people, and during which the disasters of the army were only equalled by the miserable state of the finances. Madame de Pompadour, who chose the ministers as she did the generals, from among the class of abject courtiers that surrounded her, considered docility to her demands the first quality in the comptroller of the finances, and immense sums were squandered away for the most infamous purposes, while the ministers of finance were reduced to the most immoral and disastrous means, for furnishing the treasury.

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## CHAPTER IV.

Rising importance of France as a Nation—The Philosophers—Blind security of the Government—Fall of the Jesuits—Death of the Dauphin—State of the Finances—Marriage of Louis with Marie Antoinette—Suppression of the Parliaments—Misery of the People—*Pacte de Famine*—Death of Louis XV.

WHILE the degradation of the government continued to progress, France rose as a nation. The supremacy which it had obtained under Louis XIV., by the glory of its arms and its social splendour, was inferior to that which it enjoyed under Louis XV., simply by the force of intellect. Literature stood in the place of glory, power, and liberty. All eyes were upon her. There was not a sovereign or a statesman who, either from hypocrisy or from blindness, did not flatter political philosophy, hoping to make it an instrument either of despotism or of popularity.

Theories were formed by which the happiness of the human race was to be ensured; probity, honour, citizenship, the love of humanity, appeared such simple virtues, that attempts were made to reduce them to rules, the same as an arithmetical calculation. These noble sentiments were submitted to an analysis, from which it was said they would come out purer and more fruitful in good, but which had no other effect than to corrupt them.

In this great shipwreck of all ideas, moral and religious, political and social; in this anarchy of thought, which tended to pass into action; while Voltaire and the Encyclopédistes, Montesquieu and the Economists only destroyed,—a powerful genius arose, who pretended to build up, to reanimate ideality, to lay a political foundation for a new state of society: this was J. J. Rousseau. The scepticism of Voltaire, the atheism of Diderot, the egoism of Helvetius, appeared much less attractive than the Socinian faith, the passionate spiritu-



ality, and even the ideas of self-devotion and of duty, put forth by this unstable man of genius. Till he appeared, the philosophers had sought to convert only the higher classes to their doctrines; but he addressed the masses. None had more boldly promoted a political revolution. Yet this pretended re-constructor destroyed more than all the others; he excited the sympathies more, and had more disciples. His school was more sincere, more serious, more enthusiastic, than the other schools of philosophy; it had a true and generous faith in the future; it saw the revolution approach with a grave and solemn joy. But unhappily it was wholly visionary, revelling in theories which could not be reduced to practice, and wanting that firm foundation of religious principle, without which all reforms must in time prove fallacious.

Rousseau's character and conduct as a man were despicable; showing that impulse or personal feeling, rather than principle, impelled him to put forth his vague and unsound fancies with regard to the social state; thus he has left a memory more worthy of the tears than of the gratitude of posterity.

What a lesson do the pernicious effects of the theories of these philosophers read to future ages. All foresaw\* a revolution, all vaguely expected that some unknown good would arise out of the ashes of that destruction which they so mercilessly assisted in bringing about. Genius and profound thought were engaged in forming theories for the renovation of France; they destroyed but could not build up, because they were

\* Voltaire wrote exultingly: 'I have done more in my time than Luther and Calvin; every thing I see gives evidence of the seeds of a revolution, which will infallibly arrive, and which I shall not have the pleasure of witnessing. The smothered flame is spreading nearer and nearer, and it will burst out on the first occasion; then there will be a fine turmoil. The young are very happy; they will see extraordinary things.' *Lettre à M. de Chauvelin*, 1762.

Rousseau wrote in 1760: 'We approach the time of crisis and the age of revolution. I consider it impossible that the great powers of Europe can last much longer.'

wanting in the vital principle. Religion, veneration, humility, reliance on God, were forgotten in the all-absorbing sense of the dignity and perfectibility of our own nature. There was nothing divine in these speculations for the improvement of mankind, and therefore they crumbled into dust, involving in their own ruin, venerable institutions, in which still was preserved, though amid corruption, that latent spark of divine good, which might have revived and again given life to the whole.

After the conclusion of the seven years' war, the rumbling of the volcano that was soon to burst in France, became more and more distinct, and one stone after another was loosened from the ancient monarchy of France, while the rulers looked on in calm content, thinking that it was their strength which was destroying what was in their way, not aware that the edifice was crumbling to pieces from internal rottenness. The Jesuits, whose power had, for the last century, been on the wane, and who had particularly suffered in public opinion in France, since their dissensions with the Jansenists, at last succumbed under the blows which were directed against them from all sides, and the church, one of the pillars of the state, lost its firmest support. The court, the royal family, and all ranks in the kingdom, were in so excited a state, that Louis XV. felt himself obliged to take measures against the Jesuits; but while consenting to their abolition, he wished it to appear that he had been forced into this measure, as if the greatest danger to kings was not in acknowledging the constraint under which they act. The parliament exulted, but its time was also soon to come.

While the king continued his profligate course, regardless of public affairs, he was overtaken by domestic calamities. The dauphin, whose virtues formed a touching contrast to the depravity of the court, died (1765), leaving three sons, all future kings of France.

Louis, in the first access of his grief, returned to the bosom of his family, and for a while seemed to have renounced his vicious habits; but this was but of short duration, and on the death of his amiable queen in 1768, he replunged into all his former excesses.

The peace had sufficed, in a certain measure, to restore industry and commerce, but it could not re-establish the finances. The seven years' war had added thirty-four millions of *rentes* to the debt. Although all the war taxes were continued, the expenses every year exceeded the receipts. The financial operations were carried on by anticipating and borrowing. In the collecting and distributing of the revenue, defalcations and robberies were committed to an extent which it is impossible to ascertain. All the comptrollers sank under these difficulties; as soon as they spoke of the reduction of expenses, of the equal assessment of imposts, of reforms in the collecting of taxes; they raised against themselves, the court, the privileged, and the farmers of the revenues. Choiseul, an indifferent statesman, troubled himself but little as to the state of the finances which was undermining the foundation of the throne. He hoped one day to restore these by the suppression of monasteries, and a tax upon ecclesiastical property. Like almost all the nobles, he stopped at the philosophy of Voltaire, and his hatred against the clergy; he despised the Encyclopédists, and hated Rousseau; he wished to restore the monarchy, by regenerating the *noblesse*, and by giving it the support of the parliaments.

During this dreadful state of the finances and misery of the working classes, while a distressing scarcity and consequent riots raged in Paris, the marriage of the Duke de Berri, become dauphin by the death of his father, took place with the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, daughter of Maria Theresa, empress of Austria. The festivals in honour of this event were celebrated with the most extraordinary pomp and prodigality,

forming a revolting contrast to the scenes through which the poorer classes were struggling. During a fête given in the Place Louis XV., a frightful catastrophe occurred, in which eleven or twelve hundred persons lost their lives: a fearful omen of the mistakes and misfortunes which were to follow, and darken the future lives of this amiable and ill-fated young couple. The parliaments, since their victory over the Jesuits, believed themselves the prop of society, and the masters of the government. While on one side they re-acted violently against incredulity, in pursuing the philosophers and their works, and endeavoured to reanimate the fanaticism extinguished by the iniquitous condemnation of Calas and La Barre\*, on the other hand they braved the governors and intendants of the provinces, and were opposed to all money edicts. The government finding them too strong for its weakness, resolved upon their ruin.

Choiseul upheld the pretensions of the parliament, which continued to increase till it came to an open struggle with the throne. The king held a bed of justice, and annulled its *arrêt* against the Duke d'Aiguillon—the parliament declined to continue its judicial functions. The minister having excited, by his unconcealed disgust, the enmity of the new and infamous mistress of the king, she succeeded in obtaining his exile. This dismissal was considered as a public calamity, especially when his place was filled by D'Aiguillon. This man had been governor of Brittany, and had excited the most violent hatred by his tyranny and extortion. The attorney-general, La Chalotais, declared that it was the united wish of

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\* Calas, a Protestant of Toulouse, accused of having killed his son who wished to become a Catholic, was condemned to the wheel and executed. His innocence was afterwards ascertained, and fully established through the generous and unremitting exertions of Voltaire.

La Barre, 'vehemently suspected of having broken a cross,' was beheaded.

all Brittany to be delivered from so worthless a governor. La Chalotais, the friend of Choiseul, and the enemy of the Jesuits, well known by his report against the order, had been, by the secret intrigues of the Jesuits, and on the information of the governor, arrested, accused of a conspiracy for overthrowing the monarchy, and threatened with sentence of death. The parliaments had made energetic remonstrances, and public opinion was strongly in favour of the accused. Through the entreaties of Choiseul, the king had stopped the proceedings, and sent Chalotais into exile. D'Aiguillon, recalled from the government of Brittany, had assisted in the intrigue for the downfall of the minister, and he and his coadjutors soon completed their work, by the suppression of the parliament.

On the night of the 19th January, 1771, all the members of parliament were arrested in their houses, and summoned to answer simply 'Yes,' or 'No,' to an order for resuming their functions. All answered 'No.' Then an *arrêt* of the council declared their places forfeited, and condemned them to exile.

The power which the parliaments possessed, the place which they held in the kingdom, the prominent part which they had been able so lately to play, all concurred in creating a belief that a revolution must follow such a *coup d'état*, which even Louis XIV. would not have attempted. Princes and peers protested; the *cour des aides* and the provincial parliaments were loud in remonstrances and menaces. But the agitation stopped there. The philosophers applauded, as they had applauded the destruction of the Jesuits. The government still continued to work for them. The people remained unmoved. In order to gain public opinion, it was decreed that justice should be exercised gratuitously, that magisterial places should no longer be hereditary, and that a new code, both civil and criminal, should be formed. These

were reforms which the philosophers had many times called for.

The king held a bed of justice, in which he formally suppressed the parliament of Paris, and the *cour des aides*; transformed the *grand conseil* into a new parliament, and divided its jurisdiction into six *conseils supérieurs*. This was the work of the Chancellor Maupeou, who was in strict alliance with the favourite.

All the other parliaments submitted with more or less opposition to the same re-composition; and at the end of a year this great body of the magistracy had disappeared, as if by enchantment, and without resistance. 'Everybody was stupified by a change so easily made. The court was so blind as to believe that the nation wished for a despotic monarchy; no one understood the terrible lesson which it taught. It showed that all the wheels of the government machinery were entirely rotten, since even the organ of resistance, touched by the finger of the minion of a prostitute, fell into dust. But neither Louis XV. nor Maupeou discerned anything more than that the king was stronger than Louis XIV.—the chancellor greater than Richelieu. They had restored absolute monarchy, since the two parties which divided society—the Jesuits and the Jansenists—had disappeared. With what frenzy were all the social powers then struck, since they strove only to destroy each other! And by what hands! Madame de Pompadour had overthrown the Jesuits, Madame Dubarry the Jansenists. *These* were the champions of the government of Louis XV. Blind royalty! that applauded itself for having broken the only two weapons which could resist innovation, and who believed itself at the apogee of its power, because it remained alone before the people!'

The ruin of the parliaments enabled the corrupt court to traffic with still greater impunity in places, pensions, and everything by which money could be obtained.

The expenses of the king and his abandoned mistress were enormous, and the deficiency of the year (in 1770) amounted to seventy-four millions. A national bankruptcy ensued; and the people were grievously oppressed by the injustice and dishonesty which were practised by the government to raise money.

The middle class, with its flourishing commerce, supported this enormous burthen; but it was not so with the people, who, besides the shackles placed upon industry, and the numberless charges which took from them the produce of their labour, had also to suffer from continual scarcities of food, brought on by the most infamous manœuvres. Freedom of internal commerce in grain, decreed in 1754, had been revoked during the seven years' war; but, in 1764, the economists had caused it to be re-established, and even had obtained liberty for exportation. Then a secret society was formed, (in which the king himself held shares for ten millions of francs,) which bought up all the corn, and exported it,—thus causing the price to rise enormously, and then re-imported the same grain with immense profits. The public clamour became so great, that in 1770 the minister was obliged to forbid the free circulation of grain, but the *pacte de famine* was not destroyed. The buying up continued in the interior. The king openly jobbed in the prices of corn, boasting to everybody of the infernal lucre which he made out of his suffering subjects. The society did not bring into the market the grain so iniquitously bought up, till the latest moment, when either the people must have revolted or have died of hunger. No one dared to expose this abominable *pacte*, which had accomplices everywhere, even in the parliaments. Writers were forbidden, under pain of death, to speak of the finances, and the least complaint was stifled in the dungeons of the Bastille. The people, on the other hand, pushed to the extremity of misery, conceived the most atrocious hatred against the government, the

nobles, and the wealthy—hatred which was one day to turn into frightful vengeance.

Thus the despotism and the vices of the government but too well prepared the soil for the reception of the seed, which the philosophers were busy in sowing, and the people of France were fast approaching that state, when to hold in reverence what was sanctified by the lapse of centuries was considered narrow-minded prejudice; when the goddess Reason!! became the only deity before which they bent their knee; when they entirely forgot that ‘all institutions that are not based upon a religious idea can only be transient;’ when ‘the divine right of kings’ was scoffed at by every fool, who was incapable of comprehending the deep wisdom embodied in those words; when the laws of France—that which made France, France—were made to commit suicide upon themselves, by pronouncing judgment against the Monarch, at once the source and the basis of all law\*; and when even those who wished to prove that France must be monarchical, dared to go no higher for their proof than to say that ‘France was geometrically monarchical.’

At length death (1774) released France from the despicable king who had brought monarchy into contempt. ‘But figure his thoughts, when death is now clutching at his own heart-strings; unlooked for, inexorable! Yes, poor Louis; Death has found thee. No palace walls or life-guards, gorgeous tapestries, or gilt buckram of stiffest ceremonial, could keep him out; but he is here—here at thy very life-breath, and will

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\* The cease of Majesty  
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw  
What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel  
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things  
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,  
Each small annexment, petty consequence,  
Attends the boist'rous ruin.—SHAKESPEARE.



extinguish it. Thou, whose whole existence hitherto was a chimera and scenic show, at length becomest a reality. Sumptuous Versailles bursts asunder, like a dream, into void immensity. Time is done, and all the scaffolding of Time falls, wrecked with hideous clangour, round thy soul. The pale kingdoms yawn open: there must thou enter,—naked, all unkinged, and await what is appointed thee! Unhappy man; there as thou turnest in dull agony on thy bed of weariness, what a thought is thine! Purgatory and hell-fire, now all too possible, in the prospect: in the retrospect,—alas! what thing didst thou do, that were not better undone,—what mortal didst thou generously help,—what sorrow hadst thou mercy on? Do the “five hundred thousand” ghosts, who sank shamefully on so many battle-fields, from Rosbach to Quebec, that thy harlot might take revenge for an epigram, crowd round thee in this hour? Thy foul harem: the curses of mothers, the tears and infamy of daughters? Miserable man! thou hast done evil as thou couldst. Thy whole existence seems one hideous abortion and mistake of nature—the use and meaning of thee not yet known. Wert thou a fabulous griffin, *devouring* the works of men, daily dragging virgins to thy cave: clad also in scales that no spear would pierce,—no spear but death’s! A griffin—not fabulous, but real! Frightful, O Louis, seem these moments for thee. We will pry no further into the horrors of a sinner’s death-bed.

‘And yet let no meanest man lay flattering unction to his soul. Louis was a ruler; but art not thou also one? His wide France, look at it from the fixed stars (themselves not yet infinitude), is no wider than thy narrow brick-field, where thou too didst faithfully, or didst unfaithfully. Man, “symbol of eternity, imprisoned into time!” it is not thy works, which are all mortal, infinitely little, and the greatest no greater

than the least, but only the spirit thou workest in, that can have worth or continuance\*.'

It was the populace who had insulted the remains of Louis XIV.; all classes of the nation outraged the memory of Louis XV. But the tokens of contempt and hatred were exhausted in a few days. All were happy to be able to forget a king, who for so long a time had been considered incurably weak and wicked.

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\* CARLYLE'S *French Revolution*. Vol. i., p. 25.

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## CHAPTER V.

Accession of Louis XVI.—His Character—Maurepas—Turgot—His projected Reforms—Re-instatement of the Parliament—Turgot's Measures—His Colleagues—Marie Antoinette—Riots in Paris—Turgot's Dismissal—Joseph II.

LOUIS XVI., who succeeded to the throne at the age of twenty, had been brought up away from the corrupt atmosphere of his grandfather's court; but though he had by nature and education received every quality that gives grace and happiness to private life, he was unfortunately deficient in those sterner attributes of the mind, and in that firmness and decision of character of which no prince ever stood more in need. Called to the throne under circumstances of most peculiar difficulty, called, as it were, to stop the downward course of a mighty avalanche, he found in himself no other power than the pious prayers and the benevolent wishes of a pure and honest heart. He was habitually serious, and embarrassed in manner, and wore an air of sadness, as if he had had some presentiment of his destiny. He dared not express all the benevolence which was in his heart. Because he was timid he was thought to be suspicious. Though there was nothing in him which denoted *finesse*, he discovered vice in others even under an exterior of most bewitching elegance. The court seemed to be to him a foreign soil, in which everything perplexed him. He was austere and simple in appearance, industrious in habits, penetrated with a high sense of his duties, and full of excellent intentions; but he was at the same time timid and narrow-minded, wanting in dignity of manner, and, more than all, wanting in energy and perseverance. His mind was not powerful enough to penetrate beyond the vague theories of the speculators and reformers of the day, and to find in the ancient constitution of the realm the true limits to

his own power, and the proper guarantees of the liberty of his people; it therefore recoiled before the immense task which was before him, while his heart yearned to perform it.

His first choice of a minister was a most unfortunate one, and contributed greatly to stamp the character of irresolution upon his reign; for the Comte de Maurepas, though of advanced age, and though disgraced under Louis XV., for opposition to his mistress, was, nevertheless, a man of a most frivolous and unprincipled character, a courtier rather than a statesman, and therefore always inclined to consider his master's favour, and not the interests of the state. With a master such as Louis, the former would always have been the result of the latter, had the power of his intellect equalled the purity of his intentions; but, as it was, he soon became confused by the varying representations of the conflicting parties, and contracted the habit of using half measures, of continual changes of system, of inconsistent exertions of power, and of doing everything by others, and nothing by himself. It seemed for a moment, however, as if the state and the king were to be saved from the dangers that threatened them, by a man who, to all the benevolent qualities of Louis, joined that firmness and perseverance in action, and that comprehensiveness of intellect, which are necessary for projecting and putting into practice great and useful reforms. Turgot, one of the ministers whom Maurepas had associated with himself, together with Miromesnil, Saint-Germain, Sartine, and Vergennes, was a man of profound, persevering, and energetic genius. He entertained the most exalted notions of the destinies of mankind, and joined to very extensive information and great practical knowledge of men and affairs, a consummate acquaintance with every branch of administration. He had acquired a high reputation by his writings, and by the wonders of administration which he had performed as Intendant

of Limoges, and was considered by public opinion, when he was called to the department of the finances, as the only statesman of the day. Indeed, if there had been in the king sufficient energy of character to support his minister, and in the people the traditions of true liberty to meet and to second his efforts, a revolution might have been effected, which, emanating from the crown, would have re-established its consideration, and re-awakened in the people the sense of veneration, and of obedience to established ancient forms, and spared it the fearful career of madness and crime which ended in a despotism greater than any under which it had suffered; a despotism which, in spite of constitutional forms, still weighs upon the unconscious people of France. For, though Napoleon fell, his work lives, and the iron bonds of centralization, which he laid round France, are entering into her soul unknown to herself, and destroying the very instincts of liberty.

The principal projects which at that time occupied the minds of the public were, unlimited freedom of trade, gradually introduced; the suppression of many unjust taxes levied upon necessary articles of consumption; and, above all, the abolition of the excise upon salt (*gabelle*), of forced labour (*corvées*), and of feudal services; the conversion of the two-twentieths (tax on revenue) and the poll-tax into a territorial impost, to which both clergy and nobility should be subject; the equal partition of the land-tax, according to the register of lands (*cadastre*); liberty of conscience; the recal of fugitive Protestants; the suppression of monasteries, leaving the existing occupants the possession for life; the redemption of feudal duties, as far as consistent with a respect for property; the abolition of torture, and a revision of the criminal code; a single civil code in place of the prevailing mixture of common law (*droit coutumier*) and Roman law; uniformity of weights and measures; the suppression of

wardenships and privileges of corporations, and of all obstacles to the free exercise of industry; the abolition or modification of everything which produced differences of interest in the various provinces of the kingdom.

Turgot undertook to satisfy these wants; and, notwithstanding the miserable state of the finances, his declaration on accepting office was, 'No bankruptcies, no augmentation of imposts, no new loans.' But to put into execution so many innovations, in opposition to so many private interests, a sovereign will was required, capable of crushing all resistance; and the king hesitated upon entering upon this vast career. His heart yearned towards the measures which were to ensure the happiness of his people, but his timidity recoiled before the difficulties which lay in the way of their execution, and his good nature was averse to give pain to a few, though for the benefit of the many.

Maurepas, on his side, was frightened at projects which he did not comprehend; and both prepared in advance the failure of the great minister, by creating a centre of union for the interested feelings of those castes and individuals, who defended abuses and resisted innovations. Looking around for means of strength, the latter saw, in the re-instatement of the parliaments, a hope of the maintenance of their privileges; and Maurepas, being gained over to their plans, which coincided perfectly with his own desire of curbing the growing power of the minister of finance, the king was importuned with prayers and advice to adopt this measure. In vain did Turgot urge that the proposed system of local administration and municipal courts offered much greater and surer guarantees to the people against the despotism that they so much feared, and that the parliament, regarding its re-instatement as a sign of its own strength, and not as a boon of the sovereign, would but be the more presumptuous and the more to be feared, because of its long disgrace.

Maurepas, on his side, insisted on the necessity of this measure, to counterbalance the power of the clergy and of the philosophers; and the king at last yielded, thinking that the re-establishment of this ancient institution could but tend to strengthen the social order. But institutions lose their value when men lose the thoughts which have given rise to them, and the parliament of Paris, which had for years only been the mouthpiece of a faction, had not imbibed a new spirit during the time of its disgrace, and, instead of becoming the true defender of liberty, by promoting wholesome reforms, but at the same time stemming the torrent of innovations which threatened to become too violent, it took the character of an adversary of royalty and a defender of all other privileges, thus preventing reform from emanating from its proper source, and forcing the people to take it into their own hands.

Turgot, on entering the ministry, found the finances embarrassed by a deficit of twenty-two millions of francs (880,000*l.*), and the revenue of the coming years anticipated to the amount of seventy-eight millions (3,120,000*l.*) In two years he paid off twenty-four millions (960,000*l.*) of the debt in arrears, made up twenty-eight millions (1,120,000*l.*) of the anticipated revenue, and reimbursed fifty millions (2,000,000*l.*) of *la dette constituée*. He created a *caisse d'escomptes*, the origin of the bank of France, which was the first establishment of the kind attempted since the time of Law, and abolished a number of restrictions that weighed upon industry and agriculture. But with these he perhaps abolished many an ancient regulation, which, being in contradiction with surrounding circumstances, seemed worse than worthless in the eyes of those who looked no deeper than the surface, but which were links of a chain which, though broken, might have been mended, and would have formed that bond between the past and the future which ought never to be dissevered.

But Turgot, with all his virtues, was still a man of the eighteenth century, and with him, therefore, reform and innovation were synonymous.

With regard to agriculture, Turgot agreed with Sully, and was wont to say, 'that the husbandman and the shepherd were the true purveyors of the state.' With regard to industry, his views were much more elevated and extended than those of Colbert, and he proclaimed that, 'the right to work is the first property which man possesses, and is the most sacred and the most imprescriptible.' In order to relieve these two great sources of prosperity from the obstacles that impeded their full development, three great innovations were requisite; these were, the abolition of the restrictions upon the corn trade, the suppression of wardenships and privileges of corporations, and the imposition of a land-tax to be equal for all; upon these rocks his power was split.

Maurepas was jealous of the favour with which Turgot was regarded by the king; the court was alarmed at the system of economy proposed by the minister, and the nobility saw that the course followed by the government was most threatening to their privileges, for the colleagues of Turgot had followed his example, and each in his department sought to introduce reforms. Thus Saint Germain attacked the nobility in their military honours, and suppressed several corps of the king's household troops. Sartine had succeeded in suppressing some of the pretensions of the royal navy, most insulting to the merchantmen; and Malesherbes, a friend of Turgot's, who had been admitted to the royal council as minister of the household, reformed the odious system of *lettres de cachet*\*, proposed the suppression of the censorship, and wished to re-establish the edict of Nantes.

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\* So called, because these were folded and sealed letters, in contradistinction to 'Letters Patent,' which were open. They were employed on



The orders of the state threatened by these innovations, entered into a conspiracy against Turgot, which was the more formidable from their having induced the queen to take part in it, who, though she loved her husband for his virtues, could not help seeing that his was a character more likely to be led than to give support, and she was not averse to exercising that ascendancy over him which he was so willing to allow her. Marie Antoinette was of a lively and amiable disposition, but though the ambition of holding, or at least of having the appearance of holding the reins of the state, had been suggested to her by the courtiers, who hoped to benefit themselves by it, she was nowise, either by education or natural capacities, suited for this task. Her mind did not incline towards the profound and grave studies which are requisite for the attainment of the science of government, and the education she had received at her mother's court was not of a nature to inspire the serious thoughts which her peculiar situation required. To please the French was her principal study—but to please them as a woman, not as a queen; to please them in their frivolity as they showed themselves at her court, not to please them in that serious character which was every day more and more developing itself without the precincts of the court.

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various occasions, on which the king's personal and royal authority was to be exercised. Sometimes on most unimportant matters; but the use of them, which is best known, was to order the banishment or imprisonment of any person who had not been proceeded against in any course of law. This unlimited power of imprisonment was a most fearful engine of despotism. It is supposed to have been coeval with the earliest ages of the monarchy. The first instance on record is said to be that of Queen Brunehault, who in this manner banished St. Columban at the beginning of the seventh century. The arbitrary power thus vested in monarchy was subject to no control whatever, and exercised without any responsibility, limited only by the caprice, or the fears, or the virtue, of the reigning king. The following is the form of a *lettre de cachet*:

'M. ——. I write you this letter to acquaint you that it is my pleasure that you convey the body of ——— to the prison of ——— within ——— hours. Herein fail not. Whereupon I pray God to have you in his holy and worthy keeping.'

This was signed by the king and countersigned by a secretary of state.

From being amused at the intrigues going on around her, she soon came to the wish of conducting them herself, but she was too good, too credulous, and of too lively a temperament to excel in an art which requires profound dissimulation, great perseverance, and coldness of heart.

As soon as Turgot became minister he hastened to re-establish the free circulation of grain between the different provinces; and while he endeavoured to combat the fears of the people with regard to freedom in the external trade in corn, he deferred for the present passing this latter measure. The society of the *pacte de famine*, against whose machinations Turgot had flattered himself he had taken efficient means, nevertheless produced a factitious scarcity in order to counteract his projects. The edict was attacked as if it had been the greatest imprudence to permit the French to give food to their fellow-countrymen. Riots took place in Paris and its neighbourhood in the month of May, 1775, on account of the high price of corn; people, paid by the chief instigators, pillaged the markets of the capital, scattered the grain and flour along the streets and roads, and threw them into the river, and demolished the ovens and magazines of the bakers, thus doing everything to produce the famine of which they made a pretext as the cause of their violence. These hired brigands went even so far as to annoy the king at Versailles, and the latter then gave a striking proof of the kindness of his heart and the weakness of his character, by going out upon the balcony of the palace to address the rioters, and promise them a reduction in the price of bread. It was with great difficulty that Turgot could obtain his permission to suppress these robberies by force; and from that moment the minister lost the confidence of the king. Those who conspired against him now redoubled their attacks; and when the edict for the suppression of the wardenships was presented to the parliament, they re-

fused to enregister it. Nothing daunted, Turgot advised the king to hold a bed of justice, in which it was enregistered; but this was the last effort he obtained, for Louis was now fast giving way before the resistance he encountered, and before the remonstrances of the court, and the queen, who upbraided him with degrading the royal power by all his innovations. Malesherbes, irritated by the many base obstacles which were placed in his way, quitted the ministry; but Turgot, more persevering and more courageous, waited until the king requested him to give in his resignation, in tendering which he said to the weak monarch, 'The destiny of princes who are led by their courtiers is that of Charles I.'

An event apparently insignificant, which took place at this time, contributed considerably to increase, or rather gave an opportunity to vent the growing unpopularity of the queen and the court. This was the visit of the queen's brother, Joseph II., emperor of Austria, who travelled under the simple title of the Count Falkenstein, and won the hearts of the people intent upon equality and economy, by the affability of his manners and the simplicity of his *entourage*, which served to heighten by contrast the profusion and luxury of the French court, and to render it more odious in the eyes of the people. The king's next brother, afterwards Louis XVIII., had just returned from a very expensive journey in the southern provinces of France, and the Comte d'Artois proposed to follow his example. It is said that the king, wishing to give his young brother a lesson, expressed in his presence, to the Count of Falkenstein, his surprise at seeing him travel with so small a retinue. 'I have often travelled with a much smaller one,' replied the son of Maria Theresa; and the king, pointing to the Comte d'Artois, said, 'And there is a young gentleman who demands one hundred and fifty horses for a journey to Breste.' But the Comte d'Artois nevertheless obtained what he asked for.

## CHAPTER VI.

Necker—War between England and her American Colonies—Franklin—Enthusiasm in his favour—War—*Compte rendu* of Necker—His resignation—Calonne—Growing hatred of the People to the Court and the Queen—Prodigality of the Court—The Diamond Necklace—Convocation of the Notables—Ruinous state of the Finances—Dismissal of Calonne—Brienne—Contentions in the Parliament—Which is exiled to Troyes—Recalled—Duke of Orleans—Struggles between the Government and the Parliament—Convocation of the States-General.

THE murmurs which were raised at the dismissal of Turgot, would probably have ended in some violent demonstration, had he not been almost immediately succeeded by a man who possessed the confidence of the public, and had not the minds of the people been diverted by the approach of a war which was called for by public opinion. Turgot was succeeded by Clugny, whose short ministry was signalized by the introduction of lotteries and by the re-establishment of *corvées* and *maîtrises* in 1766. He was in his turn succeeded by Necker, a Genevese banker established in France, who had rapidly accumulated great wealth, and who, an adept in the art of gaining favour from all men, was generally designated as the only man who could restore the finances; but during his ministerial career he proved himself more capable of devising palliatives, than of inventing radical cures, and as long as he restricted himself to the former, he met with less resistance than his more inflexible predecessor.

The war between England and her American colonies had broken out; the latter had declared their independence. These events produced a great fermentation in Europe, but nowhere more than in France, whose philosophers saw in the legislators of America, their own disciples, and enthusiasm was at its height, when Franklin, already celebrated for his invention of the lightning-rod, arrived in Paris in 1777 to solicit

succours for the new republic. The man 'who had snatched the thunders from heaven, and the sceptre from the hands of tyrants,' was flattered and sought by the ladies and gentlemen of the court as well as by the philosophers\*, and before the second year of his mission had elapsed, it was considered impossible to deny a fleet and an army to the countrymen of Franklin. War was clamoured for on all sides; the people demanded it from sympathy with the democrats, the nobles from a desire to weaken England and to wash out the disgrace of the seven years' war; the mercantile class hoped that it would open to them immense markets, and the statesmen thought it a good opportunity for the crown to regain some popularity. All were disappointed save the democrats, who subsequently found a new and powerful ally in the enthusiasm for liberal institutions, brought home by the young French officers who served as volunteers in the American war, and who never paused to consider whether the seed that sprouted so vigorously in the virgin soil of America would not have to be deluged in blood, before it could germinate in the exhausted soil of France.

Though the war had not realized the expectations to which it had given rise, and least of all the financial benefits which Necker had hoped to derive from it, this minister had lost none of his influence over the king, but his restless vanity, not content with this advantage, was ever seeking the applause of the multitude, and he now proposed a plan which, of all the innovations as yet projected, approached the nearest to democratic forms and was most calculated to whet the appetite for inquiry into the government of the state, which was daily growing keener. This was the publication of his *Compte rendu*, i. e., the exposition of the

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\* A good distinction has been made by some English historians, in designating these so-called philosophers, and separating them as a class by adopting in English the terms *Philosophes* and *Philosophism* when speaking of them and their doctrines.

administration of the finances during his ministry, a measure which he pretended was indispensable for the establishment of public credit, which was according to him the true secret of the financial prosperity of England. In this exposition, published in 1781, and which for the first time initiated the nation into the so long guarded mystery of the receipts and expenditure of the state, he pointed out every fault committed by his predecessors, and proudly indicated himself as the sole corrector of these faults; but in spite of all his demonstrations to prove that he had remedied all evils, and that the revenue now exceeded the expenditure by ten millions, the truth of this statement did not seem very clear to others, and he himself soon after contradicted it when he was obliged to have recourse to Turgot's project of abolishing all immunities in matters of imposts. When this measure was proposed it no longer remained a secret, that not only was the deficit not covered, but that it amounted to forty-six millions.

By adopting Turgot's measures Necker also called to life the enmities and the perfidious intrigues which caused the fall of that minister. The court was indignant at the democratic innovations of the *Compte rendu*; which was represented as a degradation of the royalty of France to a level with the royalty of England, and taught the queen to blush at what was termed the *roturier* tendencies of her royal consort. Necker, attacked on all sides, and but feebly supported by the king, who was intimidated by the clamours of the courtiers, tendered his resignation (1781), and the murmurs were then transferred from the court to the public.

At the death of Maurepas which soon followed, the place of prime minister was left vacant, but the power of the functionary was entirely vested in the hands of the queen, who henceforward became the sole adviser of the king, and used her influence to promote to office the chosen men of the court, entirely regardless of

public opinion, that giant which was daily growing in strength, and not only growing in strength but growing in hatred to her world—the court—and to her who was its life and soul; and stamped it with the character of light-hearted prodigality, that aroused the indignation of its adversary.

Joly de Fleury, who succeeded Necker, added three hundred millions to the debts of the state, and though D'Ormesson, the next in succession, endeavoured to introduce some economical measures, they were very inefficient, and when a court intrigue had supplanted him by Calonne (1783), a clever and audacious, but frivolous, dishonest, and despised magistrate, profusion again became the order of the day. Calonne, who owed his new post particularly to the Comte d'Artois, the protector of all the licentious and vicious nobles who so obstinately resisted all reforms, was adored by the court and by the queen, whose expensive tastes he not only did not restrict, but encouraged\*. The poor king listened with the same confiding simplicity that he vouchsafed to all who approached him, to the flattering tales of this audacious deceiver, who spoke of prosperity and plenty in the midst of difficulties and want; and he enjoyed a period of calm in contemplation of the happiness that was preparing for his people. So great indeed was Calonne's art, and so sincere did he seem in his belief in the efficacy of the expedients he proposed, that even the capitalists were beguiled, and he continued for three years, making loans, anticipating the revenue, issuing money edicts (*edits bursaux*), and imposing additional taxes with a facility which none of his predecessors had experienced.

In the meanwhile the people, or rather their leaders—for when do masses ever act otherwise than in following the impulses given them by those, who,

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\* Calonne is said to have answered the queen, who expressed a wish but at the same time a fear that it was a matter of difficulty: 'Madam, if it is but difficult it is done, if it is impossible it shall be done.'

while pretending to serve them, command them?—the leaders were preparing to pass from theory to practice, and the sentimental love of humanity, the rights of man, and the justice of equality, which were heard in enthusiastic expressions from all lips, were strange precursors of the bloody scenes which were to ensue, when the intellectual offspring of the eighteenth century was to preside over the destinies of France. However, this people in their love for all mankind did not include the court, and still less the young queen, who was persecuted for the faults of liveliness and thoughtlessness, with a rancour and hatred with which that same people had not visited even the dark sins of Louis XV. and his mistresses.

They saw but the profuse magnificence of the king's and the princes' households, greater even than that of the superb Louis XIV., carried on at the expense of eighty-six millions per annum, besides eighteen millions paid out in pensions. They saw the enormous debts of the Comte d'Artois, payments of which were constantly being made from the public purse, the destructively luxurious tastes of the queen, which had to be gratified, and the costly presents which were lavished on the courtiers—while they, the people, were suffering every kind of privation, and the time was gone by, when they had regarded even the brilliant faults of the court with a kind of stupid admiration. It was shown at a later date, that the demands for ready money (*ordonnances du comptant*) amounted in eight years to eight hundred and sixty-one millions (34,440,000*l.*).

The king did not personally participate in these prodigalities; as simple in tastes as he was austere in morals, he was ready to make any sacrifice that merely regarded himself; but he allowed full scope to the queen and the courtiers, and as a reward for his weakness, he did not enjoy authority even in his own court, or respect in his own family. The nobles, persuaded



that they needed but a superb and majestic king like Louis XIV. to prevent a revolution, were displeased at the undignified manners and the vulgar tastes of Louis XVI. The queen, kind and benevolent, but enamoured of pleasures and fêtes, wished to please every body, and to see nothing but smiles around her, and allowed herself to be persuaded that it was incumbent upon her to govern her husband in his weakness. Eager to be adored, rather than to be respected, she compromised her dignity by a giddiness of conduct which gave rise to the most injurious reports. The most atrocious pamphlets and the most disgusting songs were written about her. She was insulted in her honour as a wife, and attacked in her friendship for the Duchess of Polignac and the Comte d'Artois, and lastly the abominable affair of the diamond necklace, proved sufficiently what were the feelings of the public for the royal house. In this infamous plot the Queen of France was accused of having sold her honour to a reverend prelate of the church, the Cardinal de Rohan, for an ornament of immense value, and her name was coupled with that of a common prostitute. There is not the slightest doubt of the innocence of Marie Antoinette, yet such was public opinion with regard to her, that the parliament acquitted the Cardinal de Rohan, and there was not a voice raised among the people in favour of the outraged honour of the royal family.

Three years had elapsed since Calonne's accession to office, and the time was at last come when he found himself bankrupt in expedients and deceptions; when he was obliged to confess to the king that the debt had increased eight hundred millions (32,000,000*l.*); when even he, the flatterer of all parties, could devise no other means of safety than the plan of the virtuous Turgot, with one blow to destroy all privileges. But, depending upon his own talents of persuasion, to cajole the privileged classes into those concessions which his more

straight-forward predecessors had failed to obtain, he advised the king to convoke an assembly of the *Notables*, (all the classes in the state enjoying the immunities of nobility). This assembly was opened on the 22nd of February, 1787, and Calonne, in a very clever speech, announced that the deficit which had not been covered by Necker, and had gone on increasing ever since, now amounted to one hundred and twelve millions (4,480,000*l.*), and that this state of the finances could only be remedied by radical changes in the administration. He submitted, therefore, to the consideration of the assembly, a proposal for the suppression of *corvées*, the abolition of the system of farming the finances, to be replaced by provincial assemblies, charged with the assessment of the taxes, and a land-tax denominated *subvention territoriale*, without distinction of privileges, to be substituted for the two twentieths on income. Besides these, many other of Turgot's measures, such as free trade in corn, suppression of internal custom-duties, &c., were submitted to the assembly, and the audacious minister who dared to propose them, was looked upon by those whom he had flattered, and fawned upon in vain, as a base traitor, who was trying to save himself at their expense; while the people, who would have received them with enthusiasm if they had been proposed by Turgot, regarded them with suspicion, as coming from so impure a source.

It was generally reported that the deficit amounted to one hundred and forty millions (5,600,000*l.*), instead of one hundred and twelve millions (4,480,000*l.*) as stated by the minister, and that all the difficulties were owing to the frauds and deceptions he had practised. The *Notables* gave the king to understand that the reforms would be acceded to if proposed by another, and the Comte d'Artois having abandoned his protégé, the king gave him his dismissal. He was replaced by Lomenie de Brienne, archbishop of

Toulouse, an ambitious, but irresolute and incapable prelate, who had not one quality to recommend him to the post in which he was placed, but who had obtained, no one knew why, a great reputation for the manner in which he conducted the administration of his see.

The *Notables*, bound by the promise they had made previous to Calonne's dismissal, now consented to all the proposed reforms with seeming alacrity and good will, but secretly relying upon the opposition which the new measures would encounter in the parliament. They were not disappointed, for Brienne, instead of availing himself of the propitious moment, and presenting all the new ordinances at once to be enregistered, let time elapse, then presented them one after another, and thus allowed the parliament to concert its plan of resistance. The ordinances concerning the corn trade, the *corvées* and the provincial assemblies passed without difficulty, but when the *subvention territoriale*, that great bugbear of the privileged classes, was presented (June 1787), in company with an edict upon stamp duties, which was even feared by the people, the parliament, cloaking the interestedness of its opposition to the one, under the popularity of its resistance to the other, resounded with violent declamations against the minister and the court, whose prodigality it maintained was the cause of all the difficulties.

The opposition was conducted by two men of opposite characters: the one, d'Espremenil, was a most violent declaimer, and nothing more than a supporter of privileges; the other, Duport, was of a calm and energetic mind, whose views extended much farther than the triumph of the parliamentary aristocracy. The opposition of the parliament, though directed against measures of reform, was nevertheless popular; first, because these measures were considered inefficient, and secondly, because the people being accustomed to see

in the parliament, the defender of public liberties, took it for granted that it was still so, because it opposed the court; this popular approbation of parliament, acting in direct opposition to its interests, proves not only the growth of the revolutionary spirit, but its blindness.

In the heat of one of the parliamentary debates, the word *States-General* was accidentally pronounced, and from that moment it became the watchword of all parties. It seemed as if it had at once defined the vague ideas that were floating in all minds, and interests the most opposed, saw in it a hope of rescue. Every order of the state had proved itself degenerate and corrupt, yet from the assemblage of this corruption it was thought new buds of hope would spring for France. The parliament was the first to avail itself of the idea suggested by the term *States-General*, and supported its refusal to enregister the new ordinances, by declaring its incompetency to impose new taxes, a right which was vested in the *States-General* alone. This was tantamount to declaring that for centuries the king and the parliament had been usurpers of the rights of the people, and was an advertisement to the latter to reclaim their rights.

The court was greatly alarmed by this declaration, and the king held a bed of justice, to force the parliament to enregister the two new taxes. The next day the parliament declared its forced compliance invalid, and was in consequence exiled to Troyes. At the same time the Comte de Provence, the king's eldest brother, was sent to the *cour des comptes* to have the edicts enregistered, and the popular approbation of this prince, who was supposed to be favourably inclined for reforms, was expressed on this occasion in the streets of Paris, by a shower of flowers, and bursts of applause, whilst the hatred entertained for the Comte d'Artois, sent on a similar mission to the *cour des aides*, broke out in violent aggression, and

he was with difficulty rescued from the enraged mob. Following the example of the parliament, the two courts declared themselves under constraint while enregistering the edicts, and all the provincial parliaments followed the same course.

The interested motives of the parliament which it sought to deck with a semblance of deference for the rights of the people, were not long in appearing, for it soon entered into a compromise with Brienne, and upon condition of his withdrawing the edicts most opposed to its class-interests, consented to enregister the others, but at the same time the minister promised that the States-General should be convoked at the end of five years.

The parliament returned to Paris on the 10th of September, and on the 20th a royal sitting took place, in which Brienne presented two edicts, the one relative to the creation of successive loans, amounting to four hundred and twenty millions, (16,800,000*l.*), the other restoring the civil rights of the Protestants, a tardy reparation of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, obtained by Malesherbes.

The discussions became very violent, and as the nature of the sitting (whether it were a bed of justice, or merely a royal sitting) had been left undetermined, at the moment that the president proceeded to count the votes, the Duke of Orleans rose with marks of violent agitation in his countenance, and addressing himself to the king, demanded if this assembly was a bed of justice, or a free consultation? The king replied that it was a royal sitting, but when the counsellors Fréteau, Sabatier, and d'Espremenil, had risen and declaimed with their usual violence, the king, on the impulse of the moment, transformed the sitting into a bed of justice, and forced the recording of the edicts.

This act was, however, immediately on the king's leaving the assembly, declared null and void, but the

next day the two counsellors, Fréteau and Sabatier, were banished to the isles of Hières, and the Duke of Orleans to his estate of Villers-Coterets.

This duke was the great grandson of the regent, a prince of profligate morals and weak intellect—a declared enemy of the queen—and hated and calumniated by the court party. He had, in consequence, adopted the popular cause, and to him were attributed a great many of the troubles which agitated France. He soon returned from his exile; for his pride bending before the *ennui* that he experienced, he condescended to entreat the intercession of the queen in his favour.

In the meanwhile the parliament made threatening representations; Brienne was not able to raise the loans; the country was in a state of great fermentation, and the clamours for the States-General became universal; though the king had seemed to recoil from this measure in the bed of justice which he had lately held. At this juncture the government resolved to make a bold stroke to get rid of the parliamentary opposition, and to deprive the people of every pretext for revolts, by taking itself the initiative in reform. Measures were taken, that this plan should not be known before the moment of its execution; and sealed orders were despatched to all the governors of the provinces to fix one day for the promulgation of the project throughout France, and to hold the army in readiness to support the royal commands. But d'Espreménil, who had, by surreptitious means, obtained possession of a copy of the projected edicts, informed the parliament in time of the thunderbolt suspended over its head. This assembly, thrown into the greatest consternation by the announcement of a plan which considerably reduced its judicial power, and altogether annihilated its political power, was, at the same time at the greatest loss how to avail itself of its timely knowledge of the threatening dangers; for it could not deliberate on a

project which had not been laid before it, nor could it passively submit to such a blow. In this embarrassment it had recourse to an expedient which, had its full value been understood by the nation, and had it been followed by the other orders of the State, might have given a new colouring to the Revolution, which might then, indeed, have been a bright era in the history of France, and a noble example to the nations of Europe. The parliament took its stand on the '*old ways of the constitution*.' It revised and re-established, by an express act, all the constituent laws of the monarchy, which, of course, comprised its own existence and rights. By this measure the projects of government were in no way anticipated, while they were, at the same time, completely thwarted.

On the 5th of May, 1788, the parliament of Paris declared:—

'That France is a monarchy governed by a king according to the laws, and that of these laws, many which are fundamental, render sacred and inviolable—

1. The right of the reigning family to the throne descending from male to male, by order of primogeniture.
2. The right of the nation freely to grant subsidies by the organ of the States-General, regularly convoked and composed.
3. The customs and capitulations of the provinces.
4. The permanency of magistrates.
5. The right of courts to execute in every province the will of the king, and to order it to be recorded, provided it is in conformity with the constituent laws of the province, and the fundamental laws of the state.
6. The right of each citizen never to be delivered up to any other than his natural judges, who are those which the law points out.
7. The right, without which all others are useless, of every individual on being arrested, to demand trial *without delay*.

This protest is directed against every attempt which may be made against the above principles.'

To this energetic measure the ministry replied by the arrest of d'Espreménil and another counsellor, which took place in the midst of the assembled parliament, where they had sought refuge. The officer sent to arrest them, not knowing them, called upon them to present themselves. This appeal was at first received with profound silence; afterwards all the magistrates, with one voice, declared themselves to be d'Espreménils. After a third summons, however, the latter gave himself into the custody of the officer, and was carried off amidst the tumult of the populace. Three days after, (May 8th,) the princes, the peers, and the magistrates, were convoked at Versailles, where the king held a bed of justice, in which he explained his views as to the reforms required, and made all the concessions of which he was capable. 'There is not an extravagance,' said the king, 'of which my parliament has not been guilty within the last year. . . . I owe it to my subjects, to myself, and to my successors, to arrest them. . . . A great state must have but one king, one law, one recording; its tribunals must not have too extended a jurisdiction; it must have parliaments for which the most important causes must be reserved; one sole court must be the depository of its laws, and be charged with recording them; and, lastly, the States-General must be assembled whenever the necessities of the state make it urgent. Such is the restoration which my love for my subjects has prepared for them.' The chancellor then read the ordinances bearing upon the proposed reforms, and by which the *chambres des requêtes et des enquêtes* (courts of petitions and of inquiry), were suppressed, and the jurisdiction of the parliaments limited by the creation of inferior tribunals. The *tribunaux d'exception* were abolished, the criminal laws reformed, and lastly a *cour plénière* (plenary court) was created, to consist of all the lords, the bishops, the counsellors of the state, and the members of the great chamber of the parliament of



Paris, and which alone was to be charged with the recording of the laws.

But all these reforms, though good in themselves, no longer satisfied public opinion, which, growing more inordinate in its desires the more it were fed by royal concessions, seemed now to have arrived at the point where excitement, not any definite object, is the thing craved for. Besides, the States-General were now uppermost in all minds, to them turned all hopes; the reforms were, therefore, received with universal disapprobation, and the parliament which, during the royal sitting had, by deep silence, expressed its opposition, assembled the next day at a tavern at Versailles regularly to enter its protest against the proceedings and the proposed measures. Nor were the provincial parliaments more submissive. Except that of Douai, all refused to enregister the royal edict, and the parliament of Rheims even went so far as to declare all those infamous who should accept a seat in the *cour plénière*. In consequence, many of those whom the king had most relied upon refused to do so. In several of the provinces the most active measures were taken to resist the king's orders; and when the soldiers were called out to coerce the refractory burghers, it was found that the troops were not more to be depended upon than the citizens. Even the clergy added its reprobation to the universal discontent, and protested, in a general assembly, against the acts of the minister, and demanded the speedy convocation of the States-General. In fine, to complete the general discontent, the *pacte de famine*, which Necker had been unable to dissolve, but which had been kept in restraint by the character of the king, availing itself of the edict which for the fourth time abolished all restrictions on the corn trade, recommenced its infamous machinations, and excited the populace to fury.

Brienne having tried in vain every expedient which had been suggested to him, and finding himself at

last without the support of the ancient institutions of the realm, while the scheme of his new invented *cour plènière* had proved abortive, now also began to look to the States-General for relief, and they were accordingly convoked for the 5th of May, 1789.

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## CHAPTER VII.

The States-General—Ruinous Financial Measures of Brienne—His Resignation—Necker—His Popularity—Discussions on the Formation, &c., of the States-General—Misery of the People—Commutations—Opening of the States-General—Dissensions between the Three Estates—National Assembly—Royal Sitting—General Revolutionary Agitation.

As more than a century and a half had elapsed since the assembly of the States-General had been held, and as there had been so little appreciation of the value of this institution, that no records were left as to its constitutions, its forms, and its functions, the minister, desiring to make himself popular, appealed to the 'thinkers' among the nation to draw up memorials upon the composition and the attributes of the coming assembly, thus engrafting upon the *name* of a time-honoured institution a speculative theory, the offspring of a period of destruction. But the 5th May was yet distant, and the minister was without money. The king's strong-box at Versailles contained no more than two thousand louis d'ors, though the Archbishop's sacrilegious hand had been laid even upon the money which the charitable public of Paris had contributed to the relief of the poor, who had suffered from the dreadful hailstorms that had lately ravaged France. New means must be devised, and Brienne, perplexed and powerless, proposed to call Necker to his aid; but the latter wisely refused to associate himself with a minister who had incurred so much odium. The Archbishop, left to his own resources, issued paper money to bear interest, and to be redeemed with specie next year. He published a proclamation (16th August, 1788), declaring that all payments at the royal treasury should henceforth be made three-fifths in specie, and the rest in paper. Public indignation was at its height, and the minister, having ensured to him-

self and his family all the advantages he could hope for, thought it advisable to resign, strenuously advising the king to let Necker be his successor.

Necker was re-instated in office the very day that Brienne resigned, and the people manifested their delight at a change which they looked upon as a triumph over the court, by riotous assemblies, in which the retiring minister was burnt in effigy, while the portrait of his successor was paraded through the streets stuck upon a pole. During three days, blood flowed in the streets of Paris,—ominous drops from the ocean which was soon to inundate France.

Intoxicated by the incense which was everywhere offered to him, Necker, on resuming office, thought himself, as others thought him, destined to be the saviour of France; but the endeavours of a mere financier, were he ever so clever, could no more suffice to right the state of France: it was too late. Before he could take measures to prevent the exportation of corn, the *pacte de famine* had bought up all the corn, and produced a scarcity, the effects of which were the more fearful, on account of the harvest of 1788 having been a very bad one. The minister was obliged to sacrifice forty millions, to stop the rise in the price of corn, and having revoked the edicts of Brienne, and recalled the parliament, he exerted every means to carry on the government until the opening of the States-General. This was the theme of all conversations, the subject of every thought. Newspapers and pamphlets were filled with discussions on their constitution; and the philosophers, the economists, or by whatever name the unruly heads of that day were denominated, were in agitation day and night, at the clubs which had been formed after the fashion of England, deliberating upon the two important questions: whether the third estate was not to be represented by a greater number of deputies than the nobles or the clergy, and whether the votes were to be taken by

order or by head. The Abbé Sièyes, one of the most enthusiastic believers in the new creeds of the philosophers of France, and himself the founder of one, wrote a pamphlet, with the title *What is the Third Estate?* and answered his own query, by saying it was *everything*. And this answer, which was responded to throughout France, may be said to contain the history of the coming revolution. It is the confession of faith of men preparing to regenerate an ancient monarchy, by the overthrow of everything existing whence regeneration might spring—of men destroying the past, where, though buried under the ashes of centuries of abuse, still glimmered the vital spark that had given birth to the nation, and lent it power to grow; and then calling upon the nation in whom they had destroyed all divine thoughts, to rear a fabric of wisdom and liberty, with the aid of the creeds they had substituted for all that until then had been held sacred.

In a well-regulated state, there is no one class to be everything. There is *a people* consisting of *all* classes to be good and happy; that this can be as little possible (even less) when the lower classes are all powerful, than when the upper ones are so, no event in history has more clearly proved than this self-same French Revolution. Undue power in the higher classes will produce despotism and oppression, but it will always maintain some kind of government, which is certainly preferable to none. Undue power possessed by the lower classes invariably produces anarchy, that worst of all despotisms, because it is one from which they are not even themselves exempt.

The people, of course, raised its voice to demand the double representation of the third estate, and the vote by head, maintaining that, in the contrary case, every reform would be met by a coalition of the two privileged orders; and the latter taking the alarm, had again recourse to the support of the parliament, which, frightened at the danger it had itself called forth,

threw off its mask, and manifested clearly its aristocratic tendencies, by demanding that the forms of 1614 should be adopted. From this moment its popularity was lost, but the people did not profit by the lesson which their misconception of the character of the parliament might have taught them. Necker, who was an admirer of the English constitution, and who flattered himself that he should be able, in a great measure, to conduct the Revolution, was determined upon giving the third estate a double representation; but whether it were in the hope of engaging the privileged classes to submit to the reforms, or from a desire to render them still more unpopular, he convoked an assembly of the *Notables*, to give their opinion as to the composition of the States-General. Of the six bureaux into which this assembly was divided, one only voted for the double representation of the third estate; but the king, 'in accordance with the wishes of the minority of the *Notables*, with the demands of the provincial assemblies, and with the advice of the innumerable addresses presented to him on this occasion,' ordered that the number of deputies should not be less than one thousand, that they should be elected from all the bailiwicks of the kingdom; and that the number of the deputies of the third class should be equal to that of the two first ranks joined together; but whether the votes were to be collected individually, or by order, was left to the assembly itself to determine, and thus the seeds of discord were sown in advance.

The royal declaration was received with universal enthusiasm, and the elections were immediately commenced, according to the regulations laid down by the government. All Frenchmen above the age of twenty-five, and who were subjected to the poll-tax, elected two deputies out of every hundred inhabitants present at the election, to represent them at the election of the bailiwick; and these deputies in their turn elected delegates to the States-General. As for the

clergy and the nobility, the individuals possessing benefices or fiefs elected their own deputies; and the others elected one *mandatory* for every ten, who again chose the deputies for the States-General.

The elections were every where very animated, but no where broke out into open tumult except in the *pays des états*, where the local liberties gave a last sign of their existence, and the provincial assemblies struggled hard for the power of choosing from their own members their deputies for the States-General. In Brittany, where the nobles most strenuously opposed the pretensions of the *tiers états*, differences between them and the *bourgeois* broke out into open violence, and the whole province associated itself with the neighbouring provinces against the 'fanatic aristocrats.' In Provence the Comte de Mirabeau, a man of low morals but great intellectual ability, having been repelled by the nobles, offered the advantages of his eloquence to the *tiérs*. He was carried in triumph through all the towns, and became the leader of the minority of the privileged classes that joined cause with the commons.

In Paris the elections were disturbed by a riot in the faubourg St. Antoine, got up by the workmen in a paper manufactory, under pretence of taking revenge on their master who wanted to reduce their wages. Reveillon, the manufacturer, was burnt in effigy, his house pillaged and burnt, and so great was the resistance when the military were sent out to coerce the mob, that no less than six hundred persons were killed in this miserable affray. Everything seemed to conspire to lead the unhappy people into riot and tumult; their misery was at its height; commerce and industry were paralyzed by the poverty of the finances; the storm lowering on the horizon made the capitalists wary; the *pacte de famine* continued its abominable speculations, and to crown all, the winter of 1789 was as rigorous as that of 1709. From all sides came accounts of disturbances caused by actual starvation.

The country resounded with cries of hatred and fury against the nobles and the monopolizers. The large towns and principally Paris, were invaded by bands of hideous, savage-looking, audacious creatures, who seemed rather to be inspired by hatred, than by a wish of gain, and who contaminated the better-intentioned classes of their fellow-sufferers with their love of disorder and bloodshed. The higher classes of society, turning away from the true causes of these fearful and evil-boding apparitions, because they were not inclined to profit by the lessons which they held out to them, attributed them to all kinds of extraneous causes, among which the gold of the Duke of Orleans and the ministry of England were the most conspicuous.

In the meanwhile the instructions of the constituents of the different orders to their representatives were drawn up, and by the diversity of their character showed what would be the nature of the coming contest. Undoubtedly all one's sympathies at this the outset of the Revolution go with the popular party, who, however confused and vague in their ideas, were nevertheless the spokesmen of a suffering and oppressed multitude, and who really at this juncture seemed regenerated by the great thoughts that animated them, while the nobles seemed unable to rise above the narrowest class interests, unwilling to make any the slightest concessions, and even showing themselves hostile to the clergy. As for the latter, the part they played seems the most difficult to pronounce upon. Every order in the state must of necessity have become degenerate before a nation can present such a spectacle as that held up by the French during this revolution; and there can be no doubt that the Church, the institution which above all others has to watch over national morals, must have neglected its duties, and itself degraded its sacred character before the people could arrive at such a stage of corruption as to dare to set at nought law and right, and openly to declare its con-



tempt for all that has ever been held most sacred among nations. There is no doubt that had there been one order in France which had been content to maintain its own imprescriptible rights and had had within it the mental strength and honesty to resist all encroachment, it would have formed a moral support to, and even a moral regenerator of the other orders. Whatever may have been the faults of the French clergy however, they cannot be blamed for their resistance to the *tiers etat*, for being aware of the innovating tendencies of the times, they must have felt that the sacred precincts once invaded by the new apostles of the 'rights of man,' it would be impossible to stop the torrent, which in sweeping away the time-honoured edifice would tear asunder every sacred bond, and that religion and morality would be buried in the same grave, as the ancient constitution of the Church and the State.

The period for the opening of the States-General had arrived. On the preceding day, the 4th May, the king accompanied by the three orders and all the dignitaries of the state, went in solemn procession to the cathedral of Nôtre Dame, where neither pomp nor magnificence was spared, to render imposing a ceremony in which a whole nation assembled at the foot of the altar to offer up prayers for its own safety in the crisis which was approaching; and notwithstanding the unworthy scenes which followed this solemn moment, we can scarcely doubt the correctness of the accounts, that the purest patriotism on that day animated all hearts, and that for a moment all hatreds were forgotten. But, alas! nations cannot be regenerated by momentary impulses, and centuries of sin must at last bring their own punishment.

On the 5th May, 1789, the session of the States-General was opened at Versailles. The king and queen took their seats on an elevated throne, the court

in the galleries, while the two superior orders were ranged on both sides of the royal throne, and the third estate occupied the seats at the extremity of the room. So far, nothing was altered in the ancient etiquette of these assemblies; but when the king by covering his head gave the signal for the nobles and clergy to do the same, it immediately became evident that the humble places of the individuals at the extremity of the room were no wise in accordance with the feelings that animated them; for contrary to ancient usage, the *tiers état* followed the example of the privileged classes, and placed their hats on their heads. The king pronounced a speech, which, though containing expressions of the most benevolent feelings towards his people, did not touch in a decided manner upon the contemplated reforms, and must therefore have been a great disappointment to those who had gone so far in their enthusiasm and hopes, as to have dreamt of even the king's abdicating his throne, in order to receive it again from the hands of the nation.

Necker in his turn made a long and fatiguing speech on the state of the finances, which, however important it might have been, was far from satisfactory to those who, in their impatience to embody their own wisdom in the new constitution they were planning for France, had never condescended to inquire whether the liberty and prosperity of a people is not in as great a measure dependant upon the administrative system of the state, as upon its constitutional forms.

The next day each order of the deputies assembled in the separate chambers assigned to them, there to proceed to the verification of powers, and a discussion immediately arose as to whether this was to be a general or a separate transaction, effected by each order independent of the others. This question of mere form was invested with an undue degree of

importance, because under it was hidden the much graver one, whether the states were to deliberate and vote by order or in a general assembly.

The *tiers état* which, on account of their numbers, occupied the chamber appropriated to the general assembly, did not neglect this first opportunity of putting forward their pretensions, and sent a deputation to the two other orders, to let them know that they were awaiting their arrival to proceed to the verification of powers. The nobles immediately replied, that the three orders forming distinct assemblies, they should of course proceed to verify separately the powers of their deputies,—and they acted accordingly; the clergy, however, among whom were comprised a great number of country curates, whose sympathies were all with the *tiers état*, did not give a decided refusal, but proposed that commissioners should be appointed to obviate the difficulties. The proposal was acceded to, and the two first orders declared in these conferences, that they would renounce their privileges in matters of taxation, but that they would persist in refusing to vote by head. The *tiers* accepted the concession, but on their side obstinately refused to submit to separate verifications and deliberations. The conferences still remained open: as a new method of adjustment, it was proposed that the powers of the whole states should be confirmed by commissioners elected from the three orders.

The nobility, whose resistance was said to be instigated by the queen and the Comte d'Artois, again refused to consent; and on the same day declared, that for the present session they insisted on the separate verifications, but that for the future, the question could be decided by the states. This took place on the 27th May, thus twenty-two days had passed in useless discussion within the assembly, while without excitement was daily increasing. The *Salle des Menus Plaisirs* occupied by the *tiers*, was daily visited by

crowds of people, who mixed among the deputies, were probably inspired by them, and then disseminated among the people the accounts they had there received. The clubs both at Paris and Versailles, where the deputies assembled in the evening, became more and more animated. The gardens of the Palais Royal were crowded every night with people, murmuring and cursing the aristocrats and the priests. The philosophy of the revolution which the Abbé Maury (one of the deputies of the clergy) described in the words, '*Ole toi que je m'y mets,*' (Get out of the way that I may get into your place,) was beginning to declare itself openly in the streets, though in the chambers of the States-General it still retained its mask of patriotism.

The time that had elapsed had been profitably employed out of the chamber, and the *tiers état* now determined upon taking more decisive measures within. On the day of the above-mentioned declaration from the nobility, Mirabeau having now become the leader of the popular party, who were not over-scrupulous as to the private character of the men they followed, proposed that the clergy should be called upon for the last time to explain themselves, and to join the *tiers état*, which now chose to style itself the Commons, though as to the character, the position, and the principles of the majority of its members, it might with more truth have been styled the Rabble. A deputation, headed by Target, was sent in consequence to the clergy, to invite them, 'in the name of the God of peace, and the national interests,' to join the deputies of the people in the common hall, to consult on the best means of re-establishing that concord which was so necessary for the safety of public affairs.

The clergy was partly inclined to cede, but at last it was determined to avoid a decision until an appeal could be made to the king. His majesty re-opened the conferences by a plan for conciliation, which was

adopted by the clergy but rejected by the nobles. The commons continued studiously to avoid every step which could be considered as binding them to proceed as a separate chamber, and acted with a firmness and resolution, which would call forth all our admiration had it been shown in a struggle for legitimate, not for illegitimate power, and did the sequel allow us to believe that they really had the interests of the people as much at heart, as they had them on their lips. Still it is with diffidence that one pronounces upon the intentions of men, who had had their minds so confused by the philosophic tenets of their times, who had been so bewildered by doctrines 'on the rights of man,' that they may really have been led to forget, that a part of the rights of individual isolated man must be sacrificed, when he wishes to enjoy the benefits of society; and they may really have been sincerely working for the establishment of these rights, by undermining the society to which they belonged. But whatever may have been their intentions, their acts bequeathed misery and crimes unparalleled, to those masses who were looking up to them with unlimited confidence. It is, when reflecting upon this misery and these crimes, produced by the acts of those who, with presumptuous audacity, took upon themselves to despise every safeguard of the common welfare which the past history of their country offered, and to create at one stroke a constitution which should answer every exigency of the times, that we almost forget the more passive faults of the other orders of the state, while the whole weight of our indignation falls upon these self-sufficient law-breakers and constitution-makers.

The alarm of the court increased; Paris was in violent agitation,—the aristocracy were accused of trying to destroy the States-General; the scarcity of provisions augmented; bands of starving wretches, known in the history of these times under the name

of brigands, roved about the country, burning and pillaging the huts of the poor as well as the palaces of the wealthy. Those who had all their lives been at war with law, had an instinctive foreboding that their great oppressor was to be crushed, and gave earnest of how they intended to use their liberty. Those on the other side who had something to lose, began to league themselves together, not only to preserve their property, but also to defend their deputies, little thinking that it was these very deputies who were undermining the edifice, and letting loose those evils from which they already began to suffer.

The moment was decisive for the *tiers états*. The propositions made to them were such as they could not refuse upon any plausible pretext, and to avoid accepting, the first revolutionary step must be taken. Upon the 12th June, it was resolved, that the two orders should, for the last time, be invited individually, as well as collectively, to join the commons, to assist, to concur in, and to submit to the verification of powers in common. At the same time, an address was sent to the king, to announce the resolution to which the commons had come. The two orders replied that they must deliberate, and the king, that he would make known his intentions; according to the concerted plan, the commons awaited neither, but proceeded to the calling over the bailiwicks, and the verification of the powers of those that were absent, as of those that were present, during which time they were joined by three curates, delegates from Poitou, and members of the assembly of the clergy. The next day six more were added to the number, and the triumph of the popular party began.

When the verification of the powers was concluded, the assembly, anxious to break with the past, rejected the name of the States-General, which must indeed to them have been a burthensome restraint, and a discussion arose as to what name they should assume. Mira-

beau proposed that of representatives of the French people, Mounier, deputy of Grenoble, that of the majority deliberating in the absence of the minority; the deputy Legrand, that of the National Assembly, which latter was finally adopted, after a discussion that lasted till midnight. On the next day (17th June) the proposition was put to the vote, and adopted by a majority of four hundred and ninety-one against ninety, and the commons declared themselves constituted a National Assembly, in a document drawn up by Abbé Sièyes.

‘The assembly deliberating after the verification of its powers, declares that it is composed of representatives chosen by ninety-six hundredths at least of the nation. Such a mass of deputation cannot remain inactive on account of the absence of the deputies of some bailiwicks, or of some class of the citizens; for the absentees, who have been summoned, cannot hinder those present from exercising the plenitude of their rights, especially when the exercise of these rights is an imperious and pressing duty.

‘Further, since it only belongs to representatives whose powers have been verified, to fulfil the national will, and that all the verified representatives ought to be in this assembly, it must of necessity be concluded, that to it, it belongs, and to none but it, to interpret and represent the general will of the nation.

‘There cannot exist between the throne and this assembly any *veto*, or negative power.

‘The National Assembly declares, then, that the general business of national redress can and ought to be begun without delay by the deputies present, and that they ought to pursue it without any interruption or obstacle.

‘The denomination of National Assembly is the only one which suits the assembly in the actual state of things: first, because the members who compose it, are the only representatives legitimately and publicly known and verified; secondly, because they are deputed

by nearly the whole of the nation; and lastly, because representation being one and indivisible, no deputy, in whatever order or class he may be chosen, has a right to exercise his powers separately from this assembly.

‘The assembly will never lose the hope of uniting in its bosom all the deputies at present absent. It will never cease to call upon them to fulfil the obligation which is imposed upon them, of joining the assembly of the States-General. At whatever moment in the session which is about to open, the absent members may present themselves, the assembly declares beforehand, that it will with alacrity receive them, and cordially co-operate with them in their efforts to regenerate the kingdom.’

Immediately after this resolution was passed, an address was voted to the king and to the nation, and all the members took a solemn oath ‘to execute with zeal and fidelity, the functions with which they were charged,’ and then to give a proof of its power, as well as from a desire not to impede the march of administration, it legalized the existing taxes, though established without the consent of the nation, and decided that they should continue for the present to be raised in the usual manner, except in the case that the assembly should be dissolved; it placed the debts of the state ‘under the safeguard of the honour of the nation.’ Finally, it announced that it would immediately proceed to examine into the causes of the existing scarcity, and of the public suffering.

The court, stupified at the evidence of so much firmness and audacity, was thrown into a state of still greater consternation the next day, on learning that the clergy, after a tumultuous deliberation, in which a majority of one hundred and forty-nine, composed of the curates, had carried it over a minority of one hundred and fifteen, had joined the commons.

The nobles, the parliament, the princes of the blood, and the queen, all joined in endeavours to make



the king feel in all its threatening dangerousness, the usurpation of the *tiers état*, and Necker advised to put a stop to its illegal proceedings, by a royal sitting, in which the king should make all the concessions which were demanded, and should himself order the union of the three estates into one single assembly.

Strange, that already at this early stage, Louis XVI. should have been advised to present that extraordinary anomaly: a king legalizing a revolution, the evident tendency of which was to subvert the constitution, in virtue of which he held the power that he was thus advised to prostrate. There seems not even among the men devoted to royalty, to have been one who understood, that the sanctity of law and the sanctity of royalty are indissolubly connected, and that when the one is violated, the other must fall.

The court supported the proposal of Necker, and it was determined that a bold and decisive step should be taken. In the meanwhile measures were resorted to, in order to prevent the meeting of the assembly, until the royal sitting should take place, which greatly exasperated the public mind, and led to farther revolutionary proceedings.

On the 20th of June, the very day appointed for the union of the clergy with the commons, and without any previous notice to the assembly, except a verbal message to its president, Bailly, a placard was stuck on the great door of the assembly room, announcing that the States-General could not meet on that or on the two following days, on account of the preparations to be made for the royal sitting, which his majesty intended to hold on the 23rd.

Nothing exceeded the astonishment and indignation of the deputies, when they presented themselves at the door of their assembly-room, and found it shut against them; many proposed forcing the entrance in spite of the soldiers who guarded it, but upon their being joined by Bailly, they had recourse to less violent means. The

president placing himself at the head of the deputies, demanded admittance, which being refused by the officer on guard, in virtue of a royal order which he produced, the president called upon those present to witness, that he protested in the name of the National Assembly against this refusal of admittance; after which, the deputies, whose number amounted to almost six hundred, assembled in a noisy and discontented group in the 'avenue de Paris,' which affords a view of the Palace of Versailles, at the windows of which, it is said, the courtiers were observed watching and laughing at the disconsolate legislators, shivering in the cold and drizzling rain.

But the *tiers état*, nothing daunted, was determined upon holding its sitting, and was merely deliberating upon where it should take place. Some proposed following the king to Marly, whither he had retired, others wished to hold their assembly on the plain before the palace windows, but at last some one named the Tennis Court (*Jeu de Paume*) close by in the Rue St. François; and braving the perils of thus forming into an assembly, which more able authorities would have dispersed by force, the deputies repaired to this hall, which was immediately surrounded by the populace, who sympathized most ardently with all that was going on. Mounier opened the session with a speech, in which he said, 'Wounded in our rights and in our dignity—acquainted with the vivacity of the intrigues, and with the violence of the animosity by which the king is forced on to take disastrous measures, it is our duty to bind ourselves by a solemn oath, not to desert the cause of the public welfare and the national interests.' In consequence hereof, the president Bailly, mounting upon a table, pronounced the following oath: 'We swear never to desert the national assembly, and to assemble whenever circumstances render it necessary, until the constitution of the state is framed and based upon solid foundations.' Every arm was raised, and an

enthusiastic 'We swear,' burst from all lips, whilst the populace without responded to the shout.

The court, thrown into new alarm and anxiety by these extraordinary proceedings, closed this new assembly-room by hiring the Tennis Court for its own diversions; the persevering deputies were not thereby prevented from acting in accordance with their oath, and again assembled on the 22nd of June, in the church of St. Louis, where they were joined by one hundred and forty-eight members of the clergy, and two of the nobility, and they adjourned till the next day, the one appointed for the royal sitting, full of anxiety as to what it was to bring.

The military, who were marshalled in great array on the 23rd of May, proved what were the feelings of the court towards the assembly, and the deep silence in which the people contemplated the pomp of the royal *cortège*, proved what were the feelings of the people towards the court.

It had been intimated to the commons on the previous day, that no discussions would be allowed on the morrow, and the exasperation occasioned by the breach of the usual parliamentary forms, according to which a royal sitting admitted full liberty of discussion, was farther aggravated, when on the day of the royal sitting they were kept for half an hour in the rain without the side door, through which they were to be admitted, under pretence that it was yet too early. When at last their impatience grew so violent, that it was considered dangerous to put it to a farther test, and they were admitted, they found the court and the two other orders already seated. It has been said in excuse of the court, that they had had recourse to this pitiful and paltry expedient to prevent the quarrels that would most likely have arisen, during the scuffle for places, but even if this be really so, one cannot but regret that the king should have had such injudicious advisers, and that he

himself should not have been aware, that wounded self-esteem is an unquiet and revengeful feeling.

The king, in opening the sitting, spoke with unusual severity, but his weakness was already too well known for this semblance of firmness to produce any effect. 'It is my command,' said he, 'that the distinction between the three orders of the state be not infringed; the deputies forming three chambers, and deliberating separately, except when with the royal sanction they shall deliberate in common, can alone be considered as forming a body, representing the nation. Wherefore I declare null and void the resolutions adopted by the *tiers état*, as being illegal and unconstitutional.' He further prohibited them from occupying themselves with questions relative to the ancient and constituent rights of the three orders, the form of the constitution of the state, feudal and seigniorial rights and property, &c. &c.; and lastly, he submitted to their examination, and adopted in advance the following innovations; taxes and loans to be submitted to the consent of the representatives of the nation; the budget to be published; abolition of all immunities with regard to taxation, individual liberty to be established, as well as liberty of the press; the establishment of provincial assemblies, the abolition of *corvées*, internal customs, duties, &c. The king added, 'I can with truth say, that never has any monarch done so much for any nation.' But commands and concessions both came too late—too late for the former to be obeyed—too late for the latter to be appreciated. When a people has arrived at the point that it can force its governors into concessions, it is but little inclined to be grateful when they are made.

When the king left the assembly, after having commanded it to resume its sittings next day, according to the regulations he had laid down, he was followed by the nobles and a part of the clergy, but the commons, who, during the whole sitting, had maintained

a deep and evil-boding silence, retained their places, interchanging looks of the utmost astonishment. At length Mirabeau rising addressed them as follows: 'Gentlemen, I confess that what we have just heard, might be the saving of our country, were not the presence of despotism always dangerous. What means this insulting dictatorship? What means this display of arms, this violation of the national temple, in order to render you happy? Who is it that has given you these commands? Your functionary? Who is it that issues imperious laws? Your functionary? He who ought to receive them from us, who constitute a political priesthood, which must not be violated; from us, in fine, from whom twenty-five millions of men expect certain happiness, because it will, by universal consent, be given and received by all! I call upon you to exert your dignity and your legislative power, and to call to mind the religious obligations of your oath, which will not suffer you to separate until the constitution is made and established.' The grand master of the ceremonies here entered to reiterate the king's orders to adjourn, and was replied to by Mirabeau, 'Go tell your master that we are here by the power of the people, and will not be driven hence but by the power of the bayonet.' The whole assembly shouted their concurrence, and Sièyes rising said, 'We have sworn, and our oath shall not be a vain one, we have sworn to re-establish the rights of the people. The authorities which have appointed us for this great undertaking, demand a constitution. Who can make one without us? Who can make one if it be not us? Gentlemen, you are to-day what you were yesterday.' Upon which the assembly unanimously declared that it persisted in the resolutions already taken, and decreed the inviolability of its members.

In the meanwhile the court, ignorant of what was passing in the assembly, was congratulating itself upon the probable effect of its vigorous measures, and it is

said the queen, unhappily abandoning herself to a blind confidence, in her joy held up her son in her arms, presenting him to her devoted servants, who were expressing their satisfaction at the triumphs gained over her factious subjects, when the happy dreams in which they were indulging, were dispelled by the shouts of the populace thanking Necker for having absented himself from the royal sitting.

A contemporary has well described the state of the country at this period, and the effect produced by the acts of the court, in the following words: 'It would be impossible to describe the shuddering that came over me, at the bare mention of the words, "The king has annulled everything." I felt the secret fire burning under my feet; it needed but one word, and civil war would have burst over the land.' The public sympathy with, and the approbation of the acts of the National Assembly were expressed in addresses that poured in from all parts of the country, among which was one from the rabble of the Palais Royal, ominous of the heavings of society that were throwing up the mud from the bottom to the surface. A complete system of committees of correspondence had already been organized all over the country, to convey the electric shock from the assembly to its remotest parts, but lest these means should not be sufficient to spread the revolutionary doctrines, the clubs also had their committees of insurrection. These clubs had become so excited, that the Abbe Sièyes himself declared that he could no longer frequent them, because 'they proposed crimes as expedients.'

France was inundated with papers and pamphlets advocating the most extreme measures. Whoever dared to hold a middle course, and preach moderation, was denounced as an aristocrat and a traitor.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Deliberations of the National Assembly—Constitution of France—General Agitation—Disaffection of the Soldiers—Dismissal of Necker—Outbursts of the Revolutionists in consequence—Paris in the hands of the Mob—Taking of the Bastile—Dreadful Cruelties—The Assembly and the King—Mirabeau's Speech—Reconciliation between the King and the Assembly—Deputation of Members to Paris—The King goes to Paris—Returns to Versailles—Murder of M. de Foulon and his Son-in-law—Emigration.

ON the 24th of June, the court took no further measures to prevent the meeting of the assembly than sending in carpenters and other workmen, escorted by a few soldiers, to demolish the temporary galleries that had been raised for the ceremony of the preceding day; but the deputies continued their deliberations, in spite of hammering and noise, and were joined by the majority of the clergy and the minority of the nobles, who, having endeavoured in vain to influence the rest of their party, had at last decided upon separating from them; and two days after, the king, alarmed at the growing audacity of the mob, himself invited the rest of the two orders to join the assembly, but though they ceded to the royal entreaties, they did not fail to behave so as to intimate their protest against the legality of the assembly in its present form.

However, the deliberations upon the constitution to be given to the kingdom went on, and the necessity for such a step was always supported by the absurd assertion, that France (a monarchy that had stood for fourteen centuries) had no constitution, an assertion that proves more than anything else how vague must have been the ideas of the assembly upon such subjects\*, and M. Lally Tollendal, one of the mem-

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\* M. Thiers, one of the inheritors of the principles and statesmanship of those days, says, in a note to his *History of the French Revolution*, 'The question, as to whether she had or had not a constitution, seems to

bers of the minority of the nobles that had first joined the *Tiers*, lived to see and to deplore the consequences

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me to be one of the most important of the Revolution, for it is only the absence of fundamental laws, that can justify our undertaking to frame them.' And M. Thiers then quotes, as his authority for maintaining that France had no constitution, a speech of M. Lally Tollendal in the National Assembly. Let us see, however, if other and more competent judges have not asserted the reverse, and if M. Thiers, in the above quoted passage, has not pronounced the condemnation of the legislative labours of the National Assembly. In 1795, several members of the ancient magistracy of France drew up a work, under the title of *Development of the Fundamental Principles of the French Monarchy*, in which they state that 'the constitution attributes to the king the legislative power. From him emanate all laws: he has the right to administer justice himself, or to have it administered by his officers; the right of pardon, and of granting all privileges and recompenses, of appointing to the offices of the state; and of conferring nobility; of convoking and of dissolving the national assemblies, whenever he in his wisdom shall judge it convenient. The king has, moreover, the right of making war and peace, and of assembling the armies,' (p. 28.) 'The king only governs by the laws, and is not invested with the power of doing everything that his appetites may suggest,' (p. 364.) 'There are laws which the kings themselves have declared themselves happily unable to break. These are the *statutes of the realm*, distinguished from the laws of circumstances, or the laws not having reference to the constitution, which are denominated *the king's laws*,' (p. 29.) 'The kings, as supreme legislators, have always, in promulgating their laws, spoken in the affirmative. There is, however, a consent of the people; but a consent which is merely the expression of the wishes, the gratitude, and the acceptance of the people,' (p. 271.) 'The nation is represented by three orders, divided into three chambers, and deliberating separately: the result of the deliberations, if unanimous, present the resolutions of the States-General,' (p. 332.) 'The laws of the realm cannot be passed except in a general assembly of the whole kingdom, and with the concurrence of the three orders of the state. The king cannot derogate these laws, and, if he dares to violate them, all that he does may be annulled by his successor,' (pp. 292 and 293.) 'The necessity of the consent of the nation to the imposition of taxes, is an incontestible truth, and is recognised as such by the kings,' (p. 302.) 'The resolutions of the two orders cannot be considered binding to the third, unless by its own consent,' (p. 302.) 'The consent of the States-General is necessary for the validity of every perpetual alienation of the domains,' (p. 303.) And the same watchfulness is recommended to them, in order to prevent any partial dismemberment of the realm. 'Justice is administered in the king's name by magistrates, who are to examine the laws, and to see that they are not in opposition to the fundamental statutes of the kingdom,' (p. 345.) 'A part of the duty of these magistrates is to resist the sovereign when he is in error,' (p. 345.) 'The military power must not interfere with the civil administration. The governors of provinces have no command, save in what concerns the armed force, which they may make use of against the enemies of the state, but not against the citizens, who are subjected to the tribunals of the state,' (p. 364.) 'The magistrates are unremovable, and their important offices cannot be considered vacated except by the death of the occupant, by his voluntary resignation, or by



of his sincere but injudicious zeal for the welfare of the people.

In the meanwhile, the court drew together troops from all sides; 40,000 men were stationed about Paris and Versailles, but the courtiers, with their usual carelessness, took all their measures as publicly as possible, and acted without any fixed plan, so that their array of troops served more to betray their weakness than to ensure the safety of their party. The capital was in a state of the most dreadful fermentation, in consequence of the alarming reports that were spread as to the intentions of the court. It was said that the king was going to dissolve the National Assembly, to declare a national bankruptcy, to reduce the town by famine, &c. &c.; and the citizens, as well as the populace, were preparing not only to counteract these projects, but to anticipate them. The *Palais Royal*, the usual place of meeting of the agitators and news-hunters, was crowded with people who came to learn, and to descant on the deliberations of the assembly, to excite each other to resistance to the legal authorities, and to win over by violent harangues those who were not already willing to go to any length to break all existing laws, in order to have the pleasure of making new ones. On the 30th June an event took place, which must have been to the court one of the most portentous signs of the times, as it proved that even the army was not to be depended upon. Attempts had repeatedly been made to corrupt the troops stationed in Paris, and particularly the French guards, who had

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legal forfeiture,' (p. 356.) 'In causes that concern the king, he is obliged to plead before his tribunals against his people,' (p. 367.) A profound writer, commenting on this work, says, 'If it be remarked that these excellent laws were not executed, in that case it was the fault of the French people, and there is no more hope of liberty for them: for, when a people does not know how to avail itself of its existing fundamental laws, it is useless for it to seek for others,—it is a sign that it is not made for liberty, or that it is irredeemably corrupt.'—DE MAISTRE, *Consideration sur la France*, p. 107.

their permanent quarters there. These attempts had not been unsuccessful. The soldiers had several times taken part in the revolutionary demonstrations of the populace, and had declared that they would never draw a trigger against their fellow-citizens. On the 30th, several soldiers who had been imprisoned for similar conduct were violently released by the Parisian mob, who then addressed a petition in their favour to the National Assembly, which, in its turn, recommended them to the clemency of the king. The guards were imprisoned again to save appearances, but liberated the next day. The National Assembly participated in the terrors of the capital, and, trembling for its own safety, in seeing the road between Paris and Versailles blocked up by troops, kept up a regular correspondence with the plotters in the former city, with the mob of the Palais Royal, and with the electors, who had declared on the 12th May that they would remain together to support the deliberations of the States-General. At last, anxious to ascertain its real position, it openly denounced the government to the nation, and, in an address to the king, demanded the removal of the troops, which impeded the freedom of their deliberations. The king replied to this address that he had called the regiments together to prevent any disturbances, and if the States-General felt themselves constrained in their deliberations, they were at liberty to retire to Soissons or Noyon, a permission which was translated into a desire to place them between two camps, and was consequently not acted upon. The court, which had long been divided between conflicting opinions,—some being for the most extreme measures of coercion, others, among whom was Necker, for concessions,—now grown bolder, determined to strike a decisive blow, and Necker, who had hitherto been implored to retain his office, in order that his popularity might in some measure shield the court against the public animosity, was now dismissed, together with

the other liberal members of the ministry, and they were replaced by ultra-aristocrats. Necker's dismissal, which even bore the semblance of banishment, as he left France the very same day, was known in Paris the next day (12th July, 1789), and caused the greatest uneasiness. Notwithstanding the number of troops dispersed about the town, and in the neighbourhood, great crowds collected together, particularly in the gardens of the Palais Royal, where a young man, Camille Desmoulins, mounted upon a chair, pistol in hand, and harangued the bystanders: 'Citizens,' said he, 'there is not a moment to lose. The dismissal of Necker is the signal for a St. Bartholomew of patriots. This very evening the foreign battalions will leave their camp in the Champ de Mars, to come and murder us. We have but one resource left, and that is to fly to arms.' 'To arms!' reiterated his inflammable auditors; and, following the example of their leader, each man plucked a leaf from the trees of the garden, and stuck it in his hat as a cockade. They next proceeded to the shop of a wax-worker, seized upon the busts of Necker and the Duke of Orleans (whose gold, it is said, had not a little part in the enthusiastic exhibitions which so frequently took place), and paraded them through the street. Camille Desmoulins' predictions of the movements of the troops then, of course, proved true; but the havoc committed by the regiment of cavalry, headed by the Prince de Lambese, which charged the mob assembled in the Tuileries Gardens, was not great. However, the accounts of all these encounters between the royalists and the people, are so differently given by the different parties, each charging the other with the greatest excesses, that it is difficult to discern the truth. It may with probability be inferred that both parties have been greatly in fault, for civil war is a fearful instigator of evil passions. The fury of the people became more and more uncontrollable; the alarm-bell

sounded, the barriers were burnt, the shops of the armourers pillaged, and troops of brigands, mingling with the people, augmented the terror and the devastation, by burning and pillaging wherever they went. The French guards, fully imbued with all the revolutionary notions, left their barracks, where the authorities had commanded them to be held under restraint, and, bayonet in hand, charged the regiments that remained faithful, and drove them from their posts.

During this time the electors had assembled at the Hôtel de Ville, whence they directed the riots, and taking upon themselves the authority of the municipality, they delivered the arms of the Hôtel de Ville into the hands of the multitude, and ordered the convocation of the *assemblées primaires* of the districts, and finally decreed the formation of a civic guard of forty thousand men, bearing a blue and red cockade, the colours of Paris. This city was left in the hands of the mob during the night, and the next morning things bore a still more tumultuous aspect. The militia was formed, and joined by the soldiers of the French guard and of the police force (*guet*).

Camille Desmoulins, who in his restless ardour was everywhere, had arranged a separate militia of the students of the university and of the school of medicine; and the lawyers' clerks had formed themselves into a volunteer corps. Wherever arms were to be had, they were seized upon by the mob, who also, for want of more regular weapons, laid hold of anything that came within their grasp. The pavement of the streets was torn up to form barricades, and large stones were carried into the houses to be used as missiles against the troops, who played but a sorry part in all this turmoil for want of energy and judgment in their commanders. The Baron de Bessenal, the commandant, complains of having been left without orders from Versailles, while he, in his turn, is accused of having spared the mob, in the

hopes that they would spare the splendid mansion which he had lately fitted up for himself in the most magnificent style; but whatever the cause, the result was, that nothing was done to stop the lawless proceedings of the capital. The third day (July 14th, 1789,) the mob attacked the Hôtel des Invalides, where they gained possession of twenty-eight thousand muskets and twenty pieces of field artillery, and thence proceeded to the Bastille, which had for centuries been the stronghold of despotism and the dungeon of its victims, there to wreak their vengeance upon the innocent governor and the garrison, consisting of one hundred and fourteen Swiss and invalids, and there to surpass, by their atrocities, all the horrors that the grim old walls had ever yet witnessed\*.

The governor De Launay, it is said, had received orders from Besenval to hold out until the evening; at all events, the commander of a royal fortress surely could not be expected to surrender because he was called upon to do so by a rebellious mob; but the time had already come when it was considered high treason against the nation not to submit to and take a part in any of its crimes; and when, after a protracted resistance, and having in vain tried to blow up the fort, the gallant governor was forced to surrender, the fury of the mob was at its height. The garrison, though it had laid down its arms, was with difficulty saved from extermination. A young and beautiful girl, supposed to be the daughter of De Launay, was seized, and upon the point of being burnt alive, when she was saved by the heroism of a young soldier. Everything that was valuable within the fortress was

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\* It is melancholy, that when we have to record the destruction of a heartless despotism which for centuries had weighed upon a suffering people, that the acts of that people should be such that the sympathising heart sickens, and almost steels itself against the woes of those who show themselves so little deserving of liberty. But so it is—the morals of a people and its governors depend mutually upon each other, and go on acting and re-acting in one unbroken chain of cause and effect.

destroyed; and in their blind fury the mob continued to fire their muskets when there were no more enemies to attack, and thus destroyed the lives of many of their comrades. When the work of destruction was terminated, they rushed shouting and yelling towards the Hôtel de Ville, carrying one of the French guards crowned with laurel in triumph on their shoulders, while the keys and the rules of the Bastille were borne before him stuck upon a pole. At the moment that they penetrated into the town-hall, a blood-stained hand raised above the multitude presented the buckle of a shirt collar, belonging to the governor De Launay, who had just been decapitated\*.

It is said in honour of the French guards who had joined the people, and who were present at these butcheries, that they did their utmost to save the unhappy victims. But the fury of the mob could not be checked, and their thirst for blood was not yet satisfied. Their next victim was Flesselles, the provost of the merchants, whom they accused of treason. He was seized in the midst of the frightened electors assembled at the Hôtel de Ville, and dragged away to the Palais Royal, there to be judged; but the impatience of the miscreants would not wait for this mockery, and he was struck down by a shot from a pistol on one of the quays.

While these scenes of riot and bloodshed were going on at Paris, the greatest terror and anxiety prevailed at Versailles, both at court and in the assembly. The former, in hourly fear of seeing the Paris mob moving towards Versailles, lined the road between the two towns with troops, and did everything to raise the courage and ensure the fidelity of the men, without, however, taking any decisive step, though it is asserted by several historians, that a plan was concerted for

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\* It is said that his head was cut off by a cook who was present with his kitchen knife.

putting down the Revolution by force of arms, for dissolving the National Assembly, after having forced it to subscribe to the king's declaration of the 23rd of June, and for assisting the empty treasury by issuing a hundred millions of government notes.

The assembly had been anxiously watching for accounts from the capital; it is said by the partisans of the Revolution, who maintain that the assembly had been fully aware of the projects of the court, that it saw new danger to itself in these measures, but nevertheless continued its sittings. As soon as it had received intelligence of the events of the 12th, a deputation was sent to the king to demand the removal of the troops, whose presence they maintained was the cause of all the turmoil, and begging him, in their stead, to form a burgess guard. The king replied, that he could not accede to their demands, because Paris was not able to defend itself. Upon receiving this answer, the assembly passed resolutions insisting upon the removal of the troops, and on the establishment of a burgess guard, declaring the ministers and all the agents of the government responsible, casting upon the actual counsellors of the king, *however elevated their rank*, the whole responsibility of the misfortunes which were preparing. It consolidated the national debt, and persisted in all its former decrees, and then, after having expressed its disapprobation of the removal of M. Necker and his colleagues, declared itself permanent, and elected the Marquis de Lafayette\* as vice-president.

Upon receiving farther accounts of the scenes going on at Paris, new deputations were sent to the king, which equally failed in eliciting any satisfactory reply.

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\* This young nobleman owed his popularity to the part he had taken in the American war, where he had gained the friendship of Washington and the respect of his countrymen, and whence he returned with ideas of liberty, which were quite in consonance with the popular wishes of France at the time.

The king was, however, now seriously alarmed, though the court affected to laugh at the pretensions of the mob to reduce the Bastille,—a fortress which had stood the siege of the great Condé; and when at last the Duke de Liancourt, one of the deputies, a personal friend of the king's, and who held a situation in his household, which gave him access to his person at all times, broke into the king's bed-chamber in the night to announce the fall of the Bastille, a general consternation prevailed. 'What a revolt!' exclaimed his majesty. 'Not a revolt, sire,' replied the duke, 'a revolution.' He prevailed upon the king to repair to the assembly the next morning to give it a proof of his confidence. But in the interval the assembly, which had also been greatly moved at the accounts from the capital, had resumed its sitting, and, ignorant of the change which had taken place in the king's disposition, a new deputation was determined on, and was on the point of departing when it was detained by Mirabeau. 'Tell the king,' cried he, 'tell him boldly, that the hordes of foreigners by which we are surrounded were visited yesterday by the princes, the princesses, and their favourites, and have received their presents, their caresses, and their exhortations. Tell him, that during the whole night these foreign satellites, gorged with wine and money, have predicted in their impious songs the subjugation of France, and that their brutal prayers invoked the destruction of the National Assembly. Tell him, that even in his own palace, his courtiers have danced to the sound of this barbarous music, and that such were the scenes which ushered in the St. Bartholomew. Tell him, that Henry IV., whose name is blessed throughout the universe, that one among his forefathers who ought to be his model, introduced provisions into rebellious Paris, besieged by himself, and that his ferocious counsellors will not allow that corn which commerce brings, to enter into Paris when faithful and famishing.'



But scarcely was this speech pronounced, and the applause of the assembly silenced by Mirabeau himself, when the king entered, accompanied by his two brothers only, and in a simple and touching speech reassured the assembly, and told them that he had ordered the withdrawal of the troops. 'You have doubted me,' he said in conclusion, 'well then I will confide myself to you.' The sullen silence with which he had been received was now interrupted by lively exclamations of joy, and the king was escorted home by the whole assembly, accompanied by the shouts of the multitude. A deputation of one hundred members then repaired to Paris, which was preparing to withstand a siege, to announce the reconciliation of the king with the representatives of the people, and was received with the greatest enthusiasm. Bailly and Lafayette were among the delegates, and the former was offered the mayoralty of the city, the latter the command of the burgess guard. Both accepted, and advised the king to follow them to Paris, to put the seal to his reconciliation with his people.

The king consented, and fixed the 17th July for his visit. The state of Paris became every day more alarming. The barriers were closed, the regular authorities suspended, the streets lined with patrols and cannon, while hordes of murderers carried dismay and consternation everywhere, but, notwithstanding all these fearful manifestations, the king remained faithful to his word. So sure was he, however, of not returning unscathed from the dangers that beset his path, that he spent great part of the night previous to his departure for Paris, in regulating the regency, and early in the morning, after attending religious exercises, took an affecting leave of his disconsolate family, who had tried in vain to conquer his resolution.

He set off, accompanied by a deputation from the assembly, and arrived at the Hôtel de Ville, surrounded by a dark and threatening multitude, who

had not one cheer for the monarch, whose chief fault was that weakness, which rendered him incapable of inflicting pain upon others, though for their benefit, but who dared to encounter every danger which threatened his own person alone. It was only at the moment when the king appeared at the window of the Hôtel de Ville, with the national cockade in his hat, that the slightest cheer was heard from the mob. After having confirmed the formation of the national guard, and of the provincial and municipal government, in a word, after having assented to the revolution effected by physical force, he returned to Versailles, where his safe arrival produced the greatest joy.

But though Louis was safe, royalty was degraded, and France was thenceforward, for years, to know no other rulers than an infuriated multitude. Those that had conjured up the storm, thinking that they should ride as masters upon it, and lay it when it suited their purpose, now perceived that the fundamental laws of a state cannot be touched with impunity, and when once the veil is torn from the sanctuary of the temple, all reverence ceases; that the law of the land cannot be violated and still continue to be effective.

One anecdote, the truth of which has never been contested, will suffice to show what was the state of Paris after the king had left. Among the ministers who replaced Necker and his colleagues was a M. de Foulon, who is described as being hated by the people for the heartless levity with which he had spoken of their sufferings, at a time in which they were complaining that they had no bread. 'Let the canaille eat grass and thistles, it is good enough for them,' M. de Foulon is reported to have said, and the people eager to grasp at any, however absurd, accusation against the classes that they had been taught to hate, marked out M. de Foulon as the object of universal execration. Foulon being fully aware of the hatred which he had excited, and being old and weak,

fled from Versailles on the 15th July, took refuge in one of his own country-houses, and gave out that he had died of an apoplectic fit. The death and funeral of one of his servants happened very opportunely to give a semblance of truth to this fiction, but soon after the ingenious secret was betrayed, and the old man was dragged from his house by the exasperated villagers, who binding his hands, and placing a garland of nettles round his neck, and a bouquet of thistles in his breast, drove him before them to Paris, kicking and cursing him all the way. Arrived at Paris, he was brought before the mayor and the committee of electors, sitting at the Hôtel de Ville, who tried in vain to rescue him from the mob, by persuading the people that the more guilty he was the more necessary it was that he should be tried by the laws.

Law was a powerless word in the mouth of those who had themselves signed the death-warrant of the laws of the realm, and the impatient mob insisted upon carrying Foulon to the Place de Grève, there to execute justice upon him at their favourite lamp-post. Resistance was vain, every man in that fierce multitude was gasping for blood, and the report that Necker was returning to Versailles, and had recommended a general amnesty, made them more fearful of seeing their hopes of vengeance frustrated. And to the Place de Grève they dragged the white-headed old man, tied a rope round his neck, and hauled him over the *lanterne*. Three times the rope broke,—three times the miserable sufferer was precipitated to the ground, crying for mercy, and receiving kicks and insults in reply. When at last life had departed, the head was cut off and stuck upon a pike, and while some paraded this through the streets others dragged the headless trunk after them. On their way they met a mounted escort, and a crowd of people on foot, conducting Foulon's son-in-law, Berthier, who had been taken prisoner at Compiègne, to the Hôtel de Ville,

there to submit to a kind of legal interrogatory, which was, however, again interrupted by the cries of the multitude, 'Finish with him, the Faubourg St. Antoine\* is coming! The Palais Royal is coming! They will have his head!' and the next minute the guard which Lafayette had placed at the door was swept away, and the hall was inundated by the people, who were again victorious, in spite of the resistance of the authorities, and of the brave struggles of Berthier himself. Attempts were made to hang him on the same lamp-post which had just witnessed the death of his father-in-law, but he struggled so fiercely that he was pierced by several bayonets before the mob could accomplish their project. It is said that even before life was extinct, one of these vile wretches tore the heart from his panting bosom, and the mob then rushing back to the Hôtel de Ville presented it to Bailly and Lafayette. May we not suppose that at this, and other similar fearful sights, which now daily met their eyes, the conscience of these men must have smote them, and that they must have asked themselves—who it was that had let loose these bloodhounds, who it was that had converted the brilliant capital of a civilized country, into a den of murderers and robbers. The adherents of the ancient state of things, who on their side had, by obstinate and interested resistance to wholesome and timely reform, contributed so greatly to bring about the misfortunes under which they were now suffering, began to fly from the dangers which they did not know how to meet, and the king and queen, nobly sacrificing their own happiness for the welfare of those they loved, persuaded many of their most faithful servants to leave France. Several princes of the blood, among whom the king's unpopular brother, the Comte d'Artois, also left the country,

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\* The Faubourg St. Antoine is inhabited by the worst rabble of Paris.

and from that period the tide of emigration may be considered as fairly set in, and every day saw the peaceful, the lovers of order, abandoning their country and their king to the lawless hordes who were now predominant, and seeking in foreign lands those comforts which they could not enjoy at home.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Recall of Necker—Inability of the Assembly to govern—Disturbances throughout France—Frightful Atrocities committed by the Peasantry—Proceedings of the National Assembly—Despoiling of the Privileged Classes—Desecration of the Churches—Dissent of the King useless—Declaration of Rights—The Assembly intimidated by the Mob—State of Paris—Dismal Prospects for France—Military Banquet—Dreadful Tumult—The Mob proceeds to Versailles—Deputation to the King—The Palace forced by the Mob—Danger of the Queen—The Royal Family taken to Paris.

ON the 28th of July, Necker who had been recalled in accordance with the desire of the assembly and of the people, arrived at Versailles, after having traversed France accompanied by a shouting multitude, who hailed him as the guardian angel of the country, and to whom he recommended peace and order. He was received by the king with embarrassment, but by the National Assembly, who considered his recall as their triumph, he was greeted enthusiastically.

At Paris, where he may be said to have enjoyed a regular ovation, he demanded from the electors and the representatives, a general amnesty\*; which was immediately granted. But a few days afterwards the amnesty was revoked, on the plea of its being illegal for an administrative body to condemn or to pardon, for when it served their purposes, these men could even renounce the power of the moment.

Besides recalling Necker, the king had chosen his own counsellors from among the majority of the assembly, and seemed sincerely inclined to follow in the revolutionary movement. But calm and prosperity did not therefore return to the land. Obedience and subordination had become obsolete terms among the

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\* It is not one of the least strange anomalies of the times, to see the minister of the king of France appealing to a revolutionary body for a measure which, even in its revolutionary capacity, it was incompetent to grant.

French, and the people having once seized the sceptre of power, were determined not to let it again be wrested from them.

Paris remained in a state of the utmost agitation. The electors had transmitted their functions to a committee of one hundred and twenty administrators elected by the several districts. But this new municipal government, having no laws by which to be guided, being surrounded by obstacles of every kind, and having to attend to every thing: to the administration of justice, (as far as that was allowed them by their masters, the mob,) to the provisioning of the town, to police regulations, and army discipline, succumbed under the immensity of the burthen; while the national guard, commanded by Lafayette, was equally insufficient to maintain order. The provinces had followed the example of Paris, and several towns had demolished the fortresses that commanded them, as Paris had demolished the Bastille. Suddenly the report was spread that bands of brigands were traversing the country, cutting down the harvests, and destroying the granaries. The whole population flew to arms, and these arms once in their hands, were immediately turned against their fellow citizens.

The peasantry commenced a new *Jacquerie* against their landlords, they lay waste their property, and burnt down their houses, taking good care that the archives, containing title-deeds, &c., should not escape the flames, which circumstance seems to prove that the peasantry had among them, advisers better versed in the knowledge of law than they themselves. They refused to pay their taxes, and in many cases committed the most outrageous cruelties against their masters, cruelties which we would willingly pass over in silence were it not necessary to show what are the acts of a people who have set law at defiance, and what is the retribution that a false system brings upon itself.

One gentleman, the owner of a chateau, was sus-

pended in a well for an hour and a half, while his persecutors were deliberating upon what should be his mode of death. Another, the Chevalier d'Ambli, was dragged naked through the village, and buried in a dung-heap, after his eyebrows and hair had been plucked out by the roots, the mob dancing round him all the while. In Normandy, a gentleman afflicted with the palsy was thrown into the fire, and only escaped with the loss of his hands. A gentleman's steward was tortured and burnt until his feet were consumed, to make him give up his master's title-deeds. But it was not men alone on whom these savages exercised their fury. In Franche-Compté, Madame de Batilly was almost torn to pieces, and was forced to resign all claims to her property, while an axe was held suspended over her head. The Countess of Montessu was dragged with her husband from their carriage into the middle of the road, a pistol was held at her breast for three hours, and she was finally thrown into a pond.

Matrons with their daughters were seen flying from their burning houses in the middle of the night, with nothing but their night clothes on, too happy if the loss of their property was the only thing they had to bewail.

Churches, churchmen, and church property, were as little spared as nobles and their chateaux, and the people, not content with hating the clergy, openly proclaimed their hatred of religion, not alone in their deeds but in words.

While the people were thus practically showing the sense in which they understood liberty and the rights of men, the members of the National Assembly, not re-awakened from their delusive dreams by even these fearful realities, were busied in drawing up a written declaration of the rights of man, which was to serve as the basis of the much-talked-of constitution. Sometimes, indeed, the voice of reason was raised to suggest that under existing circumstances, every thing that could add new fuel to the fire that was raging without,



ought to be avoided, but this voice was soon put down by the clamours from the galleries, where the executive of France, the rabble\*, sat in lordly power, controlling the acts of its servants. There is in the spectacle of the assembly at this time, something that most forcibly recalls the old German legends in which we see conjurors ruled and tyrannized over, by the evil spirits they have themselves invoked.

On the 4th August, 1789, a vote was carried that there should be a declaration of the rights of man, but on that same day arrived such overwhelming tidings of the murders and ravages of all kinds which were being perpetrated throughout the country, that, seized with a sudden panic, the members of the privileged classes who had hitherto sought to maintain their rights, now vied with each other in sacrificing them on the altar of their country, as it was termed. The Viscomte de Noailles gave the signal by proposing the redemption of feudal rights, and the suppression of personal servitude. The Duke du Chatelet proposed redeeming all the tithes by changing them into a pecuniary tax. The Bishop of Chartres proposed the suppression of the exclusive right of the chase, the Count of Virien, that of pigeon-house and dove-cotes; others the abolition of seignorial jurisdictions, the venality of the offices of magistrates, pecuniary immunities, and inequality of imposts; also the abolition of the perquisites of the curés; of the *annats* of the court of Rome, of the plurality of benefices; of pensions obtained without titles, &c. The deputies of the *pays des états* seized next by this frenzy for self-sacrifice, then stood up to renounce the privileges of their provinces, and were followed by

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\* Though I use the word rabble, it is not to be supposed that these assemblages of men consisted merely of those we are wont to denominate by that name in England. But I use this word, because whatever was their position in society, the deeds of those men were such as to leave no other designation for them. One cannot apply the name of people or nation to an assembly of madmen and murderers, be their numbers ever so great.

the towns, and corporate bodies, all offering up their privileges. At last the assembly in a transport of enthusiasm, proclaimed Louis XVI. the *restorer of French liberty*, and a medal was struck in commemoration of this day, which a witty royalist has denominated the St. Bartholomew of property; and there were not a few, who, participating in this opinion, on the 5th August, regretted the enthusiasm of the 4th, and remonstrated as to the propriety of the resolutions passed on that day. The Abbé Sièyes himself, who, as vicar-general of the bishopric of Chartres, and canon and chancellor of the cathedral of Chartres, had to bear a great many of the sacrifices which the clergy had made, was by this home-thrust to his pocket, at once brought back to common sense, and he declared that the proposition to abolish tithes altogether, by which the declaration that the tithes should be redeemable, was followed up on the morrow, was an attempt at wholesale robbery. It was on this occasion that he pronounced the words which have been chosen as a motto to this work. He was answered by Mirabeau in these words, ‘My dear Abbé, you have let loose the bull, and now you are complaining of his giving you a touch of his horns;’ and so indeed it was; the clergy and the nobles, those who had acted from the enthusiasm of the moment, as well as those who had given way to a power they had not strength to resist, now felt the dire consequences of having joined a chamber composed of twice their numbers, and mostly consisting of men who had neither interests nor property at stake. All equilibrium in the state was gone, and the vessel was fast foundering. But that there was still dignity of sentiment left in the conquered minority, we may see from the words with which the Archbishop of Paris, seeing that resistance was useless, surrendered on the 6th of August, in the name of the whole clergy, all the tithes into the hands of the nation. ‘Let the Gospel,’ said he, ‘be preached; let divine service be performed with decency and dig-

nity, let the church be provided with virtuous and zealous pastors; let the poor be succoured. This is the true destination of our riches; these are the objects of our ministry and of our wishes; for ourselves personally we rely without bargain and without reserve, on a just and generous nation.' But, alas! the nation to which these words were addressed, was as anxious to cast off its allegiance to its God, as to its authorities, (indeed how could it be otherwise, for whosoever fears the Lord fears the law), and the churches so nobly resigned to its care, were in a few short months shut up, or converted into barracks, storehouses, or club-rooms, and the most conscientious of the clergy persecuted unto death, or wandering as exiles in foreign lands.

When Louis XVI. heard of the proceedings of the 4th August, he said that force alone should make him sanction the destitution of his nobility and of his clergy; 'For when I cede,' added he, 'there will be in France neither monarch nor monarchy.' These words were too true, and, when the king repulsed the decrees presented for his sanction, the assembly nevertheless adopted them as constitutive, and declared the royal sanction needless. Nothing was left to the king but to promulgate them.

The assembly was now clearly divided into three parties, which were generally designated by the place they occupied in the chamber. The right was the party of the court, the nobles, and the clergy, and their orators were Cazalis, a young captain of dragoons, and the Abbé Maury. The left was the popular party, whose most prominent members, besides Mirabeau and the Abbé Sièyes, were Barnave, Lameth, and Duport, the young counsellor who had distinguished himself in the parliament. The centre was occupied by a small number of the popular party, who, having gone as far as they thought right, were now anxious to stop, and whose opinions, in accordance with Necker's, called for the English constitution. The most remarkable men

among these were Lally Tollendal, Mounier, and Mallouet.

After having struck down with one blow the long-standing feudal structure, the representatives of the people went on, seriously occupying themselves with the projected declaration of the rights of man, which did not fail, in the progress of discussion, to present itself to many of the members of the assembly, in all its absurdity\*.

But the word had been pronounced, and the rabble in the gallery did not mean to give up the hopes which the words 'All men are born free and equal,' with which this declaration was to be headed, held out to them; and after having confused, and bewildered, and tired each other for many consecutive days with vague theories and disputations, a declaration, replete with contradictions and inconsequences, was at last pub-

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\* 'I remember that long discussion which lasted for weeks,' says an eyewitness, 'as a season of mortal *ennui*: there were empty disputations about terms,—there was an accumulation of metaphysical rubbish, and an overpowering loquacity,—the assembly seemed converted into a disputations school of Sorbonne, and all the apprentices in legislation made their essays in these puerilities. After many models had been rejected, a committee of five was appointed to draw up a new one. Mirabeau, one of the five, had the generosity which was ordinary to him to take the whole task upon himself, and then give it to his private friends to perform it for him. There then we were—Duroverai, Clavière, Mirabeau, and myself—composing, disputing, writing a word and scratching out four words, exhausting ourselves over this ridiculous task, and producing at last a piece of patchwork, a miserable mosaic of the pretended natural rights of men, which had never existed. During the course of this *triste* compilation, I made reflections which I had never made until then. I felt the falseness and the absurdity of the work, which was nothing but a puerile fiction. The declaration of rights, said I, may be made after the constitution, but not before it; for rights exist by laws, and cannot precede them. Such maxims, besides, are dangerous. We ought not to bind legislators by general propositions, which we may afterwards be obliged to modify and limit. Above all things we ought not to bind them by false maxims. It is not true that "*All men are born free and equal.*" They are not born free. On the contrary, they are born in a state of helplessness and necessary dependence. And where are they born equal? Where can they be so born? Do we mean equality of fortune, of talent, of virtue, of industry, of condition? The falsehood is manifest. Volumes would be required to give an appearance of sense to this equality which you proclaim without any exception.'—DUMONT.

lished, and proclaimed in the first days of September and the assembly then proceeded to debate on the form to be given to the future constitution. According to the instructions from the constituents to their representatives, which were all unanimous in demanding a representative monarchy, it would have been supposed that the constitution of England would have presented itself to all minds; but since then things had taken a different turn, and in deeds, if not in words, the nation had already passed from absolute monarchy to a democratic republic. How was it to be supposed that a house of lords could be established, after the furious scenes we have seen enacted against the nobility, and after the nobility had itself renounced all its rights; and how is it to be supposed that an insane people, rioting in the unlimited possession of power, would deliver up again willingly to the monarch, who had become a mere puppet in their hands, the sceptre which they had snatched from him? No; anarchy was let loose, and was not to be bound again, before the sins of those who had invoked it had brought their retribution of sufferings upon their heads, and therefore were the principles that were laid as the foundation of the new constitution those of the Abbé Sièyes: 'The people commands, the king executes.' So fully were these principles adopted, that it was even matter of long discussion whether the king should have an absolute or only a suspensive *veto*; during which discussions the people in the gallery, though perfectly ignorant of the meaning of the word, continually cried out *à bas le veto*, merely because it was something that was to be granted to the king. During all this time, however, the assembly went on professing its respect and affection for his Majesty, and its attachment to a constitutional monarchy, and it would be unjust to think that none of these men were sincere; but in state affairs ignorance is crime, and, therefore, whatever may have been their intentions, in point of fact,

every one of them was guilty of the downfall of the French monarchy. It was at length determined that the legislative power should be vested in a single assembly, that this assembly should be permanent, and that it should alone possess the power of proposing laws. The absolute veto was still warmly maintained, but the people, exasperated at the thought that their representatives should deliberate upon a measure which they in their ignorance had put down as connected with every kind of despotism under which they had as yet suffered, began to make most violent demonstrations. At the Palais Royal motions were made against the assembly; the deputies, who still adhered to the king, were threatened with being recalled, with being put upon their trial, with having 'their châteaux lighted up.' A general convocation of the districts was called for, and it was proposed, and even attempted, to march against Versailles. Lafayette tried in vain to arrest the multitude, bloody frays took place between the mob and the national guards, and murmurs were raised against the despotism of the bourgeois. The assembly gave way before these demonstrations, and a majority of six hundred and seventy-three voices, against three hundred and fifteen, voted for the king having the power to pronounce a suspending veto only, during two sessions of the legislature (21st September, 1789). But this vote did not restore order and tranquillity to the capital, where the scarcity of provisions was daily more and more poignantly felt, and where every vestige of authority or subordination was destroyed.

The municipality had to send to distant parts of the country for corn, which was sold at great loss, and which was obliged to be brought into town under military escort, to escape the pillage of the famished country people; and while the people were in this state of suffering, every day brought new mortal inquietudes to those who still bore the name of autho-

rities. Mayor Bailly was sinking under his cares, and Lafayette was in daily expectation of riots, which he should not be able to put down; and to crown the whole, the sixty districts into which the capital was divided took the character of sixty independent republics, each giving orders in opposition to those of the community, had its own police, its own armed force, which entered into open struggles with those of the community, and much was not wanting to make them break out into open warfare.

Dull and dreary were, indeed, the prospects of France,—anarchy and distrust reigned through the land. The aristocracy was suspected of entertaining projects of vengeance; the princès who had left the country were supposed to be seeking the succours of foreigners; the king, who had merely adopted certain articles of the declaration of rights, saying, that he could not sanction the others until the constitution was ready, was also looked upon with distrust. Reports of a new conspiracy of the court against the people were generally credited among the latter, and it was said that the king was going to fly to Metz, and to march an army against Paris, and that the queen was in correspondence with the Comte d'Artois and with her brother the emperor of Germany. A new regiment added to the garrison of Versailles, and two thousand body guards quartered in the palace, occasioned the greatest alarm, and the Palais Royal decreed that the king ought to be separated from those who surrounded him, and ought to be brought to Paris, where his presence would ensure a sufficient supply of provisions, and would accelerate the completion of the constitution.

A banquet given on the 3rd October by the *gardes du corps* (body guards,) to the officers of the garrison of Versailles, gave the signal for scenes more atrocious than any of those which had as yet taken place. It was said that the king and queen had appeared at the

banquet amid the enthusiastic cheers of the officers and guards, and that towards the end of the repast, the guests, excited by the wine which had circulated freely, had trampled the national cockade under their feet, insulted the National Assembly, and threatened an assault upon Paris. The suspicions against the court were confirmed by these reports, and it was said that a plan was laid for reducing Paris by famine.

The people assembled in great masses on all sides, and on the morning of the 5th October, a woman, who had taken possession of a drum, traversed the streets crying out, 'Bread! bread!' gathering around her thousands of her own sex, (among whom, however, it is supposed there were many men in women's clothes,) with whom she proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville, where they made a desperate attack; the national guards, posted at the entrance, giving way before them, they rushed into the interior of the building, followed by men armed with pickaxes, who pillaged the armoury. When this was done, Maillard, one of the heroes of the attack upon the Bastille, cried out, 'Let us on to Versailles;' and, 'to Versailles! to Versailles!' was echoed on all sides; and the hideous assembly set itself in motion, carrying with it wagons, arms, and cannons, and recruiting their numbers with all the women they met on their way.

In the meantime the representatives of the commune had arrived, and the tocsin had called together the national guards, but the love of anarchy had taken such strong possession of all minds that there was no peaceable set of citizens to appeal to. When, therefore, Lafayette exhorted the people to order, a grenadier of the national guards stepping forward replied, in the name of his comrades, 'The people is unhappy,—the source of their misfortunes is at Versailles,—the king must be brought to Paris,—and those who have outraged the national cockade must be exterminated.' In vain did their commander represent to them the



sufferings that such conduct would occasion; new shouts of 'to Versailles' was all the reply he obtained, and the mob moved on. Troops of savage men from the faubourgs had already joined the female furies, and accompanied them on their way, uttering the most fearful imprecations and threats against the court and the king, but more especially against the queen, whose unpopularity had gone on increasing ever since the commencement of the disorders. After eight hours' useless resistance, Lafayette at last prevailed upon the municipality to order him to Versailles with his guards, and he set out accompanied by two of its members.

The greatest consternation prevailed at court at the news of the extraordinary army which was approaching, and which was descried through a thick fog in the Paris avenue between five and six in the afternoon.

The drums immediately beat the *générale*, the iron gates of the palace yard were locked, and the body guard ordered out to defend them. In the morning the assembly had sent a deputation to the palace, to demand the 'pure and simple' acceptance of the declaration of rights, which being refused, had given rise to loud murmurs of discontent, which ended in a general denunciation of the court, and particularly of the banquet given by the guards. In the midst of this tumult news was brought to the assembly of the approach of the mob, and towards four o'clock, when they were in the act of breaking up, hordes of women rushed into the room with loud cries. Maillard, who was at their head, harangued the assembly, exposed the misery of the people, and vaguely accused persons of high standing of having brought about the scarcity by foul means. After having in vain attempted to appease this vociferous multitude, the assembly (hoping to force the king at this critical juncture to subscribe to their wishes,) at last determined to depute the president Mounier to the king to submit to him the

declaration of rights, but they were obliged to allow twelve women chosen by the mob to accompany him. The king received them with his usual kindness, gave orders that provisions (the want of which was the excuse for every riot) should be taken to Paris, and promised to accept unconditionally the declaration of rights. But during this time the mob without, growing impatient, attacked the body guards who, however, persevered in strictly maintaining the defensive; until upon the king's order, they withdrew to their quarters pursued and shot at by the Versailles militia, though they did not return a single shot. The court was in the greatest agitation, and a council was held to decide whether the king should fly or remain. The carriages were even ordered to the door, but the traces having been cut by the national guards of Versailles, the king, who was very unwilling to take any extreme measures, signed his acceptance of the declaration of rights, and decided upon remaining, in order not to give way, it is said, before the Duke of Orleans, who was strongly suspected of being at the bottom of all the riots and disorders. But the fact of the assembly's having chosen the moment of confusion for pressing upon the king the declaration of rights, certainly leaves very great room for suspicions as to the part it may have had in this tumultuous rising.

After the king had refused to leave Versailles, it was proposed that the queen at least should remove with her children to Rambouillet, a palace eight miles from thence; but she steadily refused to leave the king while he was in danger, and said, that if the mob wished for her death, she knew how to confront it.

In the meantime night had broken in, and the clamours of the savage multitude against the queen and the aristocrats spread terror and dismay through the court. At midnight the arrival of Lafayette and the Parisian army was announced. The commander immediately presented himself before the king, toge-

ther with the two deputies from the municipality, to assure his majesty of the fidelity of the national guards at Paris, and to express to him the wishes of the inhabitants of that town, which were to the effect, that he should allow himself to be guarded by the militia alone,—that he should find means of assuring the subsistence of the people,—that he should remove to the capital, and hasten the conclusion of the constitution. The king answered evasively to the last-mentioned proposals, but acceded to Lafayette's entreaties to be allowed to replace the troops of the line, who defended the palace, by his guards, part of which was composed of the former French guards. About two o'clock everything seemed comparatively quiet, when Lafayette persuaded the royal family, as well as the members of the assembly, to take a little rest; but the sounds which reached them from the public houses, in which the mob had sought shelter from the pelting rain, or from the fires round which bivouacked those who could find no other refuge, gave them sufficiently to understand that this quiet could not be of long duration.

At five o'clock Lafayette threw himself on his bed to seek rest, and at six o'clock a violent attack was made upon the body guards. Many of them were killed; those who endeavoured to escape were pursued like wild beasts, and fifteen having been seized were taken before the palace and there murdered. The main body of the rioters then rushed upon the palace, and penetrated into the interior, shouting and indulging in the grossest invectives against the king and the queen, who, warned only just in time by one of the faithful guards, who lost his life in the prosecution of his duty, had just escaped from her bed-chamber, when a party of the assassins rushing in advanced towards the bed with uplifted pikes ready to strike the fatal blow.

In the meantime the body guards having rallied after

the first surprise, and being assisted by the paid companies of the national guard, succeeded in repelling the assailants from the palace; and upon Lafayette's arrival some kind of order was restored.

But the crowd before the palace continued to vociferate 'The king must go to Paris;' and Lafayette having depicted in the most frightful colours the dangers of a refusal, Louis XVI. again putting on the so-called national cockade, the badge of rioters and murderers; presented himself at the balcony once more to degrade himself before the mob, and 'to declare himself their humble slave. He was received with shouts of '*Vive le roi*,' but the queen's name was again mentioned, accompanied by threats and invectives. According to the accounts of the royalists, this princess (who from the commencement showed a courage and a greatness of soul of which we cannot but regret the want in her husband,) appeared upon the balcony holding the dauphin by the one hand and the princess royal by the other. But voices crying out 'No children!' the prince and princess were sent in, and the queen stood in all the majesty of her beauty calmly casting her eyes upon the assembled multitude, which, struck with admiration, burst into exclamations of applause.

According to other accounts, the queen appeared on the balcony accompanied by Lafayette, who, being unable to make himself heard, respectfully kissed her majesty's hand, to make known the reconciliation which had taken place.

The storm now gradually subsided. Early in the morning the king had proposed to the assembly to transfer its sittings to the palace, in order to ensure, by its presence, the safety of the royal family. But this proposition had been rejected, and a deputation only of thirty-six members sent to the palace. When, however, the king had determined to go to Paris, in accordance with the wishes of the people, the National

Assembly decreed that the person of the king was inseparable from the representatives of the people, and that a deputation of one hundred members should accompany him.

The first bands of the mob had already moved towards Paris to announce their victory, carrying with them the heads of two body guards who had shown the greatest valour in defending their royal master. They arrived at twelve o'clock, but were dispersed by a detachment of guards sent after them by Lafayette. Two hours later arrived the commencement of a *cortège*, the end of which only entered Paris at ten o'clock at night, and which for strangeness and wildness has probably never been equalled. First came the regiment of Flanders, the Swiss, and the artillery. Then wagons loaded with ragged women and drunken men, streaming with tri-coloured ribbons, and singing obscene songs. These were followed by sixty wagon-loads of corn, after which came the national guard, interspersed with women armed in the most grotesque way with the weapons and helmets of the murdered guards, men of a wild and savage appearance, and disarmed body guards. After them came the National Assembly on horseback or in carriages, then the carriages of the royal family, to whom this journey had been one continued scene of insult and of horror, surrounded by detachments of the depraved hordes that had visited Versailles. The whole was closed by wagons containing flour and luggage.

To all that was hideous to the eye and lacerating to the heart in this scene, was added all that is offensive to the ear. Among obscene songs, frightful threats, and still more frightful exclamations of joy, were heard shouts of 'We shall no longer starve, we are bringing the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy.'

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## CHAPTER X.

Emigration of many of the Deputies—The National Assembly holds its Sittings at the Tuileries—Martial Law Proclaimed—Formation of the New Constitution—Financial Embarrassments—Extraordinary Proposition of Necker—Supported by Mirabeau—Appropriation of the Property of the Church—*Assignats*—State of Parties—The Clubs.

AFTER the king had taken up his abode at the Tuileries, some kind of outward tranquillity was for a time re-established, for even the furious mob could not refrain from acknowledging his sincere desire to do all the good he could, but the immense number of emigrations\*

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\* No less than three hundred deputies demanded foreign passports after the scene of the 5th and 6th October, and among them were two of the most moderate and most sincere members of the assembly, Mounier and Lally Tollendal, the latter of whom has left upon record, in the subjoined letter, the feelings of horror with which he viewed the ruthless deeds of those who dared to deck themselves with the name of patriots, and at the same time it gives a vivid description of the scenes we have just sketched.

. . . . 'But let us speak of the resolution which I have taken; I can perfectly justify it to my conscience. Neither that guilty city, nor that still more guilty assembly, deserve that I should justify myself to them; but I am desirous that you, and those who think like you, should not condemn me. I swear to you that the state of my health rendered it impossible for me to attend to my business, but even without considering my functions, it was beyond my power any longer to support the horror which I felt at the sight of that blood—those heads—that queen almost murdered—that king carried along like a slave, surrounded by assassins, and preceded by the heads of his unfortunate guards. Those perfidious janissaries—those assassins—those cannibal women—that cry of *all the bishops to the lamp-post*, at the very moment when the king was entering Paris, with the bishops belonging to his council in his carriage—a musket which I saw discharged at the queen's carriage; M. Bailly calling that a *happy day*. The assembly having declared in the morning that it was below its dignity to go in a body to remain with the king, M. Mirabeau saying, with impunity, in the assembly, that the vessel of state, far from being retarded in its course, would proceed more rapidly than ever towards its regeneration. M. Barnave laughing with him, while floods of blood flowed around us. The virtuous Mounier, escaping by a miracle from twenty assassins who wished to add his head to their other trophies. These are the things that made me swear never again to put my foot into that den of *cannibals* (the National Assembly), where I had no more strength to raise my voice, and where for six weeks I had raised it in vain. The only thing which was left for Mounier,

which took place at this period, shows that minds were nowise at rest, and that greater disorders were expected to follow. And indeed how could it be otherwise, while the assembly continued its work of destruction, while the chief of the state was but a prisoner and a puppet in the hands of his subjects, and while there was not in the state one power to resist the brute force which the mob had learnt so well how to use, and which was ever at the command of such men as Camille Desmoulins, Marat and others, who knew the secret of exciting ignoble passions, and were not ashamed of availing themselves of it.

Thirteen days after the king's arrival in Paris, he was followed by the whole of the National Assembly, which installed itself first in the Archbishop's palace, and afterwards in the *Salle de Manège*, in the Tuileries, and commenced a kind of inquiry into the proceedings of the people, which, however, resulted in nothing more than the temporary banishment of the Duke of Orleans, who, though nothing was proved against him, and though a prince of very little talent or capacity of any kind, it has served the purpose of different parties to designate as the instigator of all the atrocious acts which blot the annals of those times. The assembly

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myself, and other honest men to do, was to leave it. No feeling of fear has actuated me. I would blush to deny it if it were so. I have even received, on my route, applause and acclamations from that people which is even less guilty than those who have roused its evil passions; but that applause, those acclamations, which might have flattered others, made me shudder. It is before my indignation, before the horror, before the physical convulsions which the sight alone of all that blood caused me, that I have given way. One may brave death once, one may even brave it many times, if it is needed, but no power under the heavens, no opinion, either public or private, has the right to condemn me to suffer uselessly a thousand deaths in every minute—to condemn me to die of despair and rage in the midst of the triumphs, of the crimes, which I have been unable to prevent. They will banish me, they will confiscate my property. I will dig the earth for my bread, may I only not see them again. This is my justification; you may read it, show it, copy it; so much the worse for those who cannot understand it; but I shall not be wrong for having given it to them.'—Extract of a Letter from M. Lally Tollendal, to a friend.

then resumed its constitution-making, but was soon interrupted again by new riots, occasioned by the renewed scarcity of provisions, and being now in the midst of the danger, and having learnt that its members were nowise considered sacred by the people, it was deemed necessary to take strong measures of defence, and martial law was proclaimed in Paris. By this law the municipalities were made responsible for the public tranquillity; in case of riots they were empowered to call in the aid of the troops or of the militia; and after three warnings, were ordered to employ force against seditious assemblies. This law was not passed without opposition, particularly from Robespierre, deputy of Arras, who having also become ambitious of power, courted the suffrages of the mob, which it required no great genius to see was at that moment its sole dispenser. Still this time order was triumphant in the assembly, the members of which in truth began to feel rather uneasy at the chaos around them, out of which they had to create a new world.

One cannot but think that at this juncture, even among these men, most of whom affected to be free-thinkers, there must have been a vague feeling that such power belongs to the Almighty alone, and that man, if he wants to build, must have something to build upon, were that something even but a mud bank, or a fetid swamp; and that he who destroys the foundation, and attempts to build upon the vacuum it leaves, is but a madman or a knave. But should even this gleam of truth have forced itself upon them, they had no longer the power of retracing their footsteps; the impulse was given, faith was destroyed, and human arrogance had taken its place.

Thus though recourse was had to some of the ancient institutions of the country, such as the court of the Châtelet, to inquire into and put a stop to the disorders that were daily taking place, the assembly at the same



time went on with its work of destruction. It had abolished the feudal system, but there was another body in the state, with ancient rights and ancient authority, which had as yet not been wholly divested of these. 'The clergy possessed property. They had received it from princes under the name of feudal gratifications, and from the faithful under the title of legacies. If the property of individuals, the fruit and reward of labour, ought to be respected, that which had been bestowed on a body of men on conditions altogether different, ought to yield to the empire of the law. It was for the service of religion they had been given, or at least under this pretext, but religion being a public service, the law might provide means of accomplishing this object in any way deemed most advantageous to the public interest\*.' The Abbé Maury on this occasion, as Abbé Sièyes on a previous one, stood up in defence of the clergy, and pointed out the peril to all property, if such a measure were carried. But Mirabeau who had replied to Abbé Sièyes by a *bon mot*, now decided the hesitating assembly by a play upon words. He suggested that instead of saying that the property of the clergy *belonged* to the state, they should say that it was *at the disposal* of the state, and the discussion was immediately terminated by a great majority in favour of the measure. In the mean time the constitution began by degrees to rise on the foundation which had been laid on the 4th of August, and the resolutions passed on that memorable night, became the starting-point of a political organization, in which particular existences, either of individuals or of institutions, were to disappear in the national unity. 'It was necessary

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\* THIERS. M. Thiers follows up this passage by saying that the assembly, by taking possession of the property of the clergy, secured to itself those immense financial resources which so long supported the *Revolution*. These were then 'the services of religion which the law' thought proper to substitute for those to which it was applied by the clergy. What law is this? What religion? What do these men understand by law and religion?

first to produce this unity in the land, by doing away with those provinces which still seemed to be but so many different nations which the dynasty of the Capets had gathered together, without confounding them in the monarchical unity. A decree abolished the division of the kingdom into provinces, and divided France into eighty-three departments, almost equal in population and extent, and which were subdivided into districts, cantons, and *communes*. This division took into account neither local customs, local traditions, nor local existences; the surface of the land was taken as its only basis; the provinces were deprived of their privileges, their parliaments, and their separate administrations; even their historical names which recalled to the mind thoughts of independence, were blotted out, and new names, derived from the physical construction of the soil, announced that there were no more duchies, no *pays d'états*, no Bretons, no Provençaux, there were only France, and Frenchmen. This was the chief work of the assembly, it completed the destruction of the feudal system, broke for ever the chain of olden times, commenced the era of new social systems, and united all the strength of the state, in one powerful centralization; in a word, it was the constitutive act of the national unity, which had been prosecuted with so much perseverance, since the time of Hugh Capet, and thus attained after eight centuries of struggles\*.

The whole political system was harmonized with the departmental division, and for this end the administration of the departments was confided to a council of thirty-six members, and to an executive directory of five members; the districts had similar authorities subordinate to those of the department, and the com-

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\* LAVALLÉE. I give this description in the words of a French writer, because though he is by no means one of the most immoderate of the partisans of the Revolution, they convey the spirit in which these changes were undertaken, and the way in which Frenchmen of our day account for the labours of the National Assembly.

mune was directed by a council and a municipality, which was again subordinate to the authorities of the district. This was the material basis of the new system; the moral basis was the election of all these authorities by the people. The *acting* citizens, that is, all those who paid a contribution of the value of three days' work, (one mark of silver,) chose from among the citizens who paid a contribution of one hundred and fifty, or two hundred days' work, electors, who in their turn nominated the deputies for the National Assembly, the administrators of the department, of the district and of the commune, and the judges, the bishops and the curates. The parliaments were abolished, and in their stead three new orders of tribunals erected, whose members were elected, and only temporary: there was a criminal tribunal for every department, a civil tribunal for every district, and a justice-of-peace for every canton. Besides these, a supreme court was established, charged with the functions of watching over and preserving the judicial forms. Trial by jury was admitted in criminal cases only.

In order to give a clearer conception of the new constitution which the assembly prepared for France, I have somewhat anticipated the date, for all these regulations were not at once established, and by degrees as they were decreed, they awoke new resistances, and brought out more decidedly the different parties in the state, so that between the contests of the supporters of the old order of things, and the enactors of the new, general confusion prevailed, and even those earnestly inclined to submit to whatever were the rules of the kingdom, were embarrassed what part to take.

The passing of the decree (2nd December, 1789,) which put the assembly in possession of the property of the clergy, was perhaps greatly accelerated by the extraordinary financial embarrassments which impeded the march of the revolution. The assembly had from

time to time suspended its legislative discussions, to satisfy the most urgent wants of the treasury, and had adopted, almost without discussion, the provisional means proposed by Necker. But a loan of thirty millions, decreed on the 9th of August, had not succeeded, and a subsequent one of eighty millions, decreed on the 27th of the same month, had been insufficient, as all the ordinary sources of revenue were stopped by the abolition and reduction of many taxes, and by the difficulty of collecting those that remained. It was then that Necker proposed an extraordinary contribution of a fourth of the national income, payable in advance, and that Mirabeau supported him by that burst of eloquence, which carried the measure. 'In relation,' said he, 'to a ridiculous motion which never had any importance except in weak imaginations, or in the perfidious designs of dishonest men, you have lately heard these furious words, *Catiline is at the gates of Rome, and we deliberate!* and there was around us neither Catiline, nor factions, nor perils, nor Rome; but to-day the bankruptcy, the hideous bankruptcy is here, it threatens to swallow up yourselves, your property, your honour, and you deliberate!'

The measure thus carried, had also produced only a momentary relief, and therefore recourse was had to the decree which had declared the property of the church, national property. The difficulties were not, however, got rid of, even by these extraordinary means. When a decree ordered the sale of church domains to the amount of four hundred millions, it was found that purchasers did not present themselves, for the rapidity with which the innovations followed upon each other, and the general confusion they produced, impressed even the most superficial minds with an idea of the precipitancy and instability of the new regulations, and men were unwilling to part with their cash for property, the legality of the possession of which might soon

be disputed. The 'commune' of Paris helped the assembly out of this dilemma. It proposed, and the assembly resolved, that the municipalities should be authorized to purchase these domains from the state, and to sell them again to private individuals, when they should present themselves, but as the municipalities had not ready money to pay down at once, it was decided that they should pay in bills, with which bills the treasury would, in its turn, pay its creditors. Afterwards it was found better, instead of these municipal bills, or *assignats*, as they were denominated, to create exchequer bills, to which they gave a forced circulation, and which became, in reality, a paper money, as a decree limited the quantity of *assignats* to the value of the ecclesiastical property, which was put up for sale, and ordered the immediate destruction of all redeemed *assignats*. But the power of infringing as well as the power of decreeing, was in the hands of the assembly, and at a later period, *assignats* were circulated to an amount immensely surpassing that of the value of the lands, a measure, say the partisans of the revolution, and of the doctrines of expediency, 'which was not very perfect in a financial point of view, but which was most excellent in a political point of view, as it was the saving of the revolution.' Thus a revolution which commenced in the name of a suffering people, supported itself by still farther impoverishing that people.

During the debates which were going on in the assembly, the parties became daily more decidedly marked, and each had again, without the assembly, its supporters, and instigators, particularly among the clubs, which grew in importance as the revolutionary movement extended, and in some of which were already germinating the still more democratical movement which was to succeed to the existing one. The most prominent among them, was that of the 'Friends of the constitution,' first formed at Versailles by Lafayette and

other of the Breton deputies, but which was now transferred to Paris, and established in the ancient convent of the Jacobins in the Rue St. Honoré, from which it took its name of the Jacobin Club, a name which has become but too fatally notorious in the history of these times. From this period dates the admission into its body of persons quite unconnected with the assembly, and a change in the spirit of its members, who soon separated. One party, at the head of which were Danton and Camille Desmoulins, for whose hot patriotism, even the revolutionary eloquence of the Jacobins was too lukewarm, established themselves in the convent of the Cordeliers, the name of which they took; another party whose moderate principles repugned the violent proceedings of the Jacobins, and which was particularly influenced by Lafayette and afterwards joined by all the moderate men of the times, took the name of the "Club of 1789; Friends of the Monarchical Constitution," afterwards converted into that of the "Feuillans," after their place of meeting, the convent of the Feuillans. It is said that the Jacobin Club counted no less than three hundred similar establishments in France, which were in direct correspondence, and forty-four thousand in indirect correspondence with it. What was its influence and power, may be judged from this immense extension, and what was the character of its influence cannot be better described than by quoting the words of a writer of the present day, who says, when speaking of the eloquence of its members, it was 'impassioned, dull, droning, patriotic eloquence: implacable, unfertile save for destruction, which was indeed its work: most wearisome, though most deadly\*.'

The activity of these clubs was powerfully aided by the innumerable newspapers that were in circulation,

and by the oratory of the hundreds of mob patriots, who following the example of their betters, harangued the passers by, from the top of the corner-stones, or from a tub, a barrel, or an old chair, and passed their opinions upon state affairs, and national regeneration.

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## CHAPTER XI.

Reports of Counter-Revolutions—Disaffection of the common soldiers—The King appears at the Assembly—His speech received with universal applause—Distrust again exhibited—Execution of Favras—Counter-revolutionary projects—Debates in the Assembly—Civil Constitution of the Clergy—Fête in the Champ de Mars—Revolt in the Army—Clergy required to swear to maintain the *civil constitution* just decreed—The King compelled at length to sanction this decree—Opposition of the Clergy—Mortification of the King.

At the commencement of the year 1790, the comparative calm which had succeeded the king's removal to Paris, began again to give way before a general agitation and uneasiness, particularly caused by the number of reports that were in circulation as to the counter-revolutionary intentions of the court, which was supposed sometimes to base its hopes upon succours from without through the instrumentality of the emigrants, particularly of the Comte d'Artois, who had sought refuge at Turin, and sometimes on the army under Marshal Bouillé\*, and even on the assistance of certain parties in the assembly†.

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\* Bouillé, stationed at Metz, commanded a large division of the army, and a vast extent of frontier, and possessing all the feelings of the aristocracy, though not in their excess, he did everything in his power to preserve his troops from rising. He was a man of great courage, much talent, and great integrity, and could not therefore fail to be disgusted with the weakness of the court and the base and clandestine measures of its agents.

† From the period of the court's removal to Paris, Lafayette's conduct becomes more clear, and thenceforward he cannot but be regarded as a sincere adherent of the Constitutional Monarchy; as one of those who, disgusted with the outrages committed by that revolution which they began in hope and sincerity, earnestly endeavoured to put down anarchy, and to bring about a reconciliation between all parties which should ensure the happiness of the country. He therefore approached the court, and was received by it with more cordial feelings than before. It is said, however, that the queen, who was in fact the directing spirit of the court, hoped more from Mirabeau, whom she had succeeded in winning, and who in point of genius was vastly superior to Lafayette. Of all the men of the Revolution none have been so differently judged as Mirabeau. After a youth spent in vice and wild adventures, he presented himself to the nobles of Provence as a candidate for their suffrages for the States-General, but being indignantly rejected by his peers, he turned to the *Tiers Etat*,



Violent affrays often took place between the army and the populace, and frequently the common soldiers, who were devoted to the new order of things, while the officers adhered to the old, delivered up the latter to the vengeance of the people. The clergy, particularly in Brittany, where they had most influence, protested against the alienation of their property, and excited their flocks to support their interests; the parliaments also made a last struggle for their ancient rights and privileges, and all these movements were in the minds of the people and the assembly connected with the plans of the court. At this time a Marquis de Favras, an adventurer who had sought his fortune in different parts of Europe, was brought before the court of the Châtelet accused of being at the head of a conspiracy to promote the flight of the king, to assassinate Bailly and Lafayette, whose National Guards still guarded the palace, and to march an army of Swiss and Piedmontese against Paris. The alarm was general, and it was whispered, that Monsieur, the king's eldest brother, who had once had some

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offering himself as advocate of interests the very reverse of those of the nobility. What mattered it to him? he had no convictions to follow up, he merely sought a stage on which he could act before the world. When there, though his voice was the one which was most frequently raised to threaten and coerce royalty and its instruments, it was his voice also that was raised to prevent despotism from being merely transferred from the crown to the representatives of the people, and to maintain for the crown the prerogatives without which the monarch would be a mere puppet. But it was his voice also which determined the fall of those ancient institutions whose birth was cotemporary with that of the monarchy which was left a foundering wreck when they fell. Like all the men of his day Mirabeau had no clear and defined object for which he was labouring, and though the superiority of his genius often afforded him glimpses of the truth, when others were in utter darkness, he had not in his heart that love of truth which would have led him to toil unceasingly for its attainment when he had once discerned it. True genius will always discern truth, but it is the moral character of the man, that will decide whether this discernment will lead to great results or not. There never was a truly great man (even in the general acceptation of the term, which does not of necessity comprise moral greatness) without faith, and it is this absence of faith that is the cause of our not seeing one great man during the French revolution. The infamous celebrities of the reign of terror, were but mediocrities led by circumstances, not commanding them.

connexion with Favras, was not a stranger to this plot. The prince presented himself at the Hôtel de Ville, and protested against the insinuations directed against him, and the king, alarmed at the agitation created by this new suspicion, was advised to take steps to conciliate public opinion. On the 4th February he in consequence repaired to the assembly, where his presence was quite unexpected, and where he was received with great applause. After the assembly was again seated, the king standing addressed to them a speech, in which he expatiated on the troubles to which France was a prey, the efforts which had been made to calm them, and to provide for the subsistence of the people; he recapitulated the proceedings of the assembly, glancing at the efforts he had himself made to attain the same objects in the provincial assemblies, and finally showed that he had throughout manifested a desire for reforms. He added that he thought it particularly incumbent upon him to ally himself more closely to the representatives of the nation, at the moment when they had submitted to him decrees, destined to give a new organization to the kingdom. He would endeavour to promote this new system, he said, with all his power, and would consider every attempt to resist it as highly criminal, and punish it with all the severity of the laws. These last words were enthusiastically applauded, and the king proceeded to notice the sacrifices which he had himself made, and called upon all those who were similarly situated, to imitate his resignation, and to let the advantages of their country console them for the sacrifices of their private interests. After having promised to defend the constitution, he added, 'I will do more; in concert with the queen, who partakes of all my sentiments, I will prepare by times the mind and heart of my son\*, for

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\* What had been the impression this unhappy child had received of the revolution may be judged by the touching anecdote told by Mde. Campan. Walking on the day after their arrival at Paris, in the garden

“this new order of things, which circumstances have brought about; I will accustom him from his earliest days to be happy in seeing the French people happy, and to acknowledge for ever, in spite of the language of flatterers, that a wise constitution will preserve him from the dangers of inexperience, and that a lawful liberty will add a new value to the sentiments of love and fidelity, of which the nation has for so many ages given such touching proofs to its kings.” At this part of the speech the transports were universal, and for a moment it might have been supposed that the sentiments of which the king had spoken, were still glowing in all hearts. The king continued—expressing his anxiety about the respect due to the ministers of religion, and to the rights of property, and timidly recommending the assembly not to undertake too many things at once, and representing how necessary it was to establish the authority of the executive power, without which there could be no lasting power within the kingdom, no respect abroad, no effective government. He ended by professing his attachment to the new constitution, his ardent desire for the peace, happiness, and prosperity of France, and exhorting his subjects to follow his example.

Unmixed applause from the assembly, from the galleries, and from the people without, applause in which even the queen had a share, proved the complete success of the step the king had taken. No sooner had he departed than the assembly voted an address of thanks to him and the queen, and then following the royal example, each of its members took oath “to be true to the nation, the law and the king, and to maintain with all his power, the constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by the king.”

This as every other feeling at that time communi-

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of the Tuileries, with the queen, the dauphin, on seeing some scuffle take place in the street, rushed into his mother's arms, asking in an agony of terror, “Mama, mama, is to-day going to be yesterday again!”

cating itself like an electric shock, from one to another, the whole nation was soon repeating the oath; but even before the enthusiasm at this reconciliation between the people and the king could reach the more distant parts of the kingdom, distrust had already sprung up anew among the parties. Favras had been condemned to death by the Châtelet, though protesting that he was innocent, and was hanged on the Place de Greve, to the great satisfaction of the populace, who had long been impatient to enjoy the example of equality represented by the spectacle of a marquis dangling from a common gibbet, which it surrounded with a kind of savage delight, indulging in atrocious jests, and parodying in different manners the death-struggle of the unfortunate sufferer\*.

In the south a regular connexion was maintained with the Comte d'Artois and the emigrants at Turin, and different counter-revolutionary projects were entertained. The '*haute noblesse*' refusing, it is said, to let any other class have a part in re-establishing the ancient state of things for fear of having to share the advantages with it, was determined to re-establish the throne by the succours of foreign courts alone, while the '*petite noblesse*,' rejecting with indignation such a plan as little better than treason, proposed to re-awaken the ancient spirit of fanaticism of these provinces, and to make the religious ardour of the people and their attachment to their priests serve the purposes of the crown†.

The ancient hatred of the Catholics for the Protestants was fomented, and it broke out in open violence, when the assembly refused, on the 13th July, 1790, to recognise the Catholic faith as the religion of the state. The discussion of this question occasioned the most

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\* THIERS.

† M. FROMENT, *Recueil de divers Ecrits relatifs à la Revolution*. M. Froment was one of the chief actors in the plans carried on between the provinces of the south and Turin.

violent scenes in the assembly, and is said to have been brought about by the court, which seems at that period to have been most active in secret machinations against the Revolution, in order to bring the assembly into disrepute with those among the French who still clung to their ancient faith. A few days afterwards another question was mooted, which is also attributed to the court. The new organization was completed, and as the people was to be convoked to elect its magistrates, it was proposed that they should, at the same time, elect new deputies to replace those who actually formed the National Assembly, and whose power, it was maintained by those who framed the proposition, was limited to one year, which was now very near its expiration. This proposition was, indeed, pregnant with so much confusion and disorder, that no one can help suspecting its origin, whether we incline to the side of those who pretend that it was a project of the court, which, thinking that the aristocracy and the clergy would be able to exercise a pre-eminent influence over a new election, deemed it a means of regaining power, or whether we look upon it as an attempt of the republican party, whose centre was the Jacobin club, at once to obtain that power, which they but too soon gained. However this might be, the proposition was vehemently rejected, and the assembly decreed that new elections should not be proceeded to, until it should be deemed proper by its own body. These debates were soon followed by others no less violent, on the following momentous questions—whether the right of declaring war and peace should appertain to the crown or to the assembly, and on the *civil constitution of the clergy*. The first question was left entirely to Mirabeau and Barnave, the former supporting the right of the crown, the latter advancing the claims of the assembly, and looked upon as the champion of the rights of the people, though he, in fact, only clothed the same proposition in different

words. Mirabeau, on this occasion, excited such hostility among the populace, that the report of his having sold his services to the court, which had long circulated in whispers, was now loudly proclaimed, and a pamphlet was hawked about the streets, having for title '*High Treason of the Comte de Mirabeau.*' But these attacks only lent new vigour to Mirabeau's eloquence, which gained the first decisive victory for the crown which it had won since the commencement of the Revolution. It was decreed that the king should notify to the assembly the commencement of hostilities, and propose the decree of war or of peace, on which the assembly was to deliberate, and present the result of its deliberations for the sanction of the king.

By the *civil constitution of the clergy* was understood the placing of the whole ecclesiastical establishment of the state on the same footing as the judiciary. Every department was to have its bishop as it had its superior tribunal and administration, and bishops and curates were to be elected as were the administrators and judges. This arrangement, which completely destroyed the constitution of the church, dis severed the bonds which bound it to Rome, and made it entirely dependent upon the people, of course met with the most violent resistance from the clergy, who appealed to the pope against these decisions.

But discord was now again to be suspended for a moment to give place to one of those wonderful scenes of almost idyllic love and harmony to which this strange people seemed to abandon itself with as much delight as it did to the diabolical scenes of carnage and suffering in which it had already taken part, and which were to be far surpassed in the future.

The strange love of excitement, whatever its nature, as evinced at this time, furnishes one of the strongest proofs that the Revolution, though originally caused by a false and wicked system, was carried on by a kind of national intoxication without an aim or an object.

The troubles in the south had given rise to confederations between those who were devoted to the Revolution, which were entered into with a kind of solemnity, the confederates swearing in public, to the accompaniment of drums and fifes, and with flying banners, and other festive demonstrations, that they would stand by each other in all trials. And as this passion for swearing seemed to have taken possession of the whole people, these confederations, promoted by the jacobin club, and not discouraged by the National Assembly, soon spread over the whole kingdom\*, and were to be crowned by the general confederation of the whole of France, which, according to the proposition of the municipality of Paris, was to be celebrated in the capital by deputations from all the national guards, and from all the regiments of the army, on the 14th of July, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille†. The description of this fête, certainly one of the most extraordinary the world has ever witnessed, is given in the following words by a contemporary, M. de Ferrières: 'The confederates arrived from all parts of the empire; they were lodged in private houses, whose possessors were anxious to furnish beds, sheets, wood, and all that might contribute to render their stay in the capital agreeable and comfortable. The municipality took measures to prevent this great confluence

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\* It is strange that all French historians persist in seeing in those demonstrations evidence of the faith of the people in the Revolution, whereas, in truth, they prove that the nation felt, (though without accounting to itself for the feeling,) that it was in a state of dissolution.

† As a prelude to this feast of harmony and brotherly love, the assembly decreed that the feeling which the populace had given utterance to under the gibbet of the Marquis de Favras should be still further indulged, and that nobility and titles, and all their distinguishing marks, such as armorial bearings, liveries, &c., &c., should be abolished, and thenceforward men were to be distinguished by their merits alone. Mirabeau, notwithstanding his affected disdain for the class to which he belonged by birth, is said not to have been quite indifferent to the sacrifices of giving up his title, and to have exclaimed (31st August, 1790,) upon the occasion, 'With your Riquetti, (his family name,) you have confused all Europe for three days.'

of strangers from troubling the public tranquillity. Twelve thousand labourers worked without ceasing at the preparations in the Champs de Mars. Notwithstanding the activity with which this work was carried on, it advanced but slowly. It was feared that it could not be finished for the 14th July, the day which was irrevocably fixed for the ceremony, being the famous epoch of the insurrection of Paris and the taking of the Bastille. In this difficulty the districts invited, in the name of the nation, the good citizens to join the workmen. This civic invitation electrified every one; the women partook of the enthusiasm, and propagated it; seminarists, novices, sisters of religious orders, and monks grown old in solitude, left their monasteries, and repaired to the Champs de Mars, with spades on their shoulders, and carrying banners ornamented with patriotic emblems. The scene which this plain presented was as singular as it was interesting. The most dissimilar characters were associated together with the most perfect equality; a dishevelled courtesan and a virtuous matron might be seen working together as fellow-labourers, a capuchin and a chevalier of St. Louis drawing the same dray, a porter and a *petit maitre* digging at the same piece of ground, a robust fish woman and an elegant lady of rank filling the same barrow. The rich, the poor, the well-dressed and the ragged, old men, children, comedians, soldiers, clerks, some at work, some at rest, actors and spectators, afforded together a spectacle full of life and motion. Moveable taverns and portable shops; songs and exclamations of joy, the sounds of drums and military music, the clatter of spades, the roll of barrows, and the voice of labourers encouraging each other, completed the charm and gaiety of this enchanting scene.

‘The 14th of July, the day of the confederation arrived. If this grand ceremony had not the serious and august character of a fête, at the same time



religious and national, a character which is nearly irreconcilable with the temper of the French people, it presented a delightful and animated picture of joy and enthusiasm a thousand times more touching. The confederates ranged by departments under eighty-three banners, set out from the Place de la Bastille; the troops of the line, bands of sailors, the Parisian national guard, drums, bands of music, and flags, opened and closed the march.

‘The confederates traversed the streets of St. Martin, St. Denis, and St. Honoré, and proceeded to a bridge of boats built on the river. They were received in their progress by the acclamations of an immense populace, who thronged the windows, the streets, and the quays. Wine, hams, and fruit, were let down to them from the windows, and the people hailed them with benedictions. The National Assembly joined the procession at the Place Louis XV. and marched between a battalion of veterans, and of scholars of the military school; a station expressively emblematic, which seemed to intimate that in them the interests of all ages were united.

‘Meanwhile more than three hundred thousand persons had been assembling from Paris and the environs, at the Champ de Mars, since six o’clock in the morning. They were seated on the grass bank which formed a circus round the plain, dripping with rain, and splashed with mud, and holding up umbrellas to keep off the torrents which poured upon them, and on the slightest symptom of returning sunshine, wiping their faces, adjusting their dresses, and awaiting with smiles the arrival of the National Assembly. As soon as the first confederates arrived, they struck up a dance. Those who followed imitated their example. This spectacle of so great an assemblage of men come from all parts of France, banishing all memory of the past, all thought of the present, and all apprehension of the future, and giving unrestrained vent to the gaiety of

the moment; and of three hundred thousand spectators of every age, and both sexes, following their movements with their eyes, beating time with their feet, and forgetting the rain, hunger, and the wearisomeness of waiting so many hours, was worthy the contemplation of a philosopher. At last the whole procession entered the Champ de Mars; the dancing ceased, and the Bishop of Autun\* proceeded to solemnize the mass. Lafayette, at the head of the Parisian militia, and of the naval and military deputies, then approached the altar, and swore in the name of the troops and confederates, to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king. The discharge of four pieces of artillery announced to France this solemn adjuration. The president of the National Assembly repeated the same oath. The people took it up, and the words *I swear it*, rent the air. The king rose up and proclaimed with a loud voice, *I, King of France, swear to employ the power with which a constitutional act of the state has invested me, to maintain the constitution decreed by the National Assembly, and accepted by me.* The queen at the same time taking the dauphin in her arms, and holding him up to the people, exclaimed: *Behold my son; he joins me in these sentiments.* This unexpected exclamation called forth a thousand shouts of *Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine! Vive le Dauphin!* Bands of military music, the roars of artillery, and the acclamations of the people, then closed the ceremony with stunning and triumphant harmony.

With the festive decorations disappeared the seeming concord, and France was again the theatre of fierce struggles. All Bouillé's endeavours had been in vain; the army, inspired by the pervading spirit, had revolted, first at Metz, then at Nancy, at which last place an engagement (31st August, 1790) ensued between the troops who had remained faithful, and the rebels,

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\* The celebrated Talleyrand.

in which the latter were conquered, and for a time order was re-established.

Necker, whose influence and popularity had long been on the wane, made a last ineffectual protest against the issuing of eight hundred millions' worth of *assignats*, decreed by the assembly, and then tendered his resignation, and his example was soon followed by his colleagues in the ministry, who were indeed but mere nullities, and who had been made to understand that such was the desire of the assembly.

The king, whose position became more and more painful, began at this period to entertain thoughts of flying from the capital, thoughts which he had a long time rejected, because he judged that his flight would be the signal for civil war; but things now began to wear such an aspect, that this evil seemed at all events to be inevitable.

The popular party, exasperated by the continued efforts of the clergy in the western and southern provinces, to get up counter-revolutionary movements, decreed as a means of crushing their resistance, that the ecclesiastics, as well as all other functionaries, should take the civil oath before their 'communes' and in their churches, and in addition to this, that they should swear to maintain the *civil constitution of the clergy*. Those that refused were to be considered as having forfeited their situation, and it was ordered that lists should be made out with the names of those who took, and those who did not take, the oaths. These decrees were presented to the king for his sanction. He secretly referred them to the pope, who refused his concurrence, but riots having again taken place, the king gave his sanction, and thereby greatly exasperated the clergy, who persisted in their resistance to a measure which they considered illegal in the extreme. With the exception of sixty-four curates, all the ecclesiastics members of the assembly refused to take the oaths, (27th November, 1790,) and their example was fol-

lowed by five-sixths of the clergy of the realm. They were, in consequence, dismissed from their functions, and their places filled with more tractable occupants. But the dismissed ecclesiastics protested against these proceedings, declared their successors to be illegal intruders, and excommunicated all those who should receive the sacrament from their hands.

To all the other anomalies in the state, was thus added the deplorable spectacle of two distinct clergies, the one in open opposition to the new laws of the state, the other heretical according to the ancient laws of the church. The revolutionary party lost the support of men, whose moral character ensured respect, while the adherents of the *ancien régime*, regained by their means, a part of the people, who in some of the provinces of France, were devotedly attached to their priests, who had always been to them true friends and protectors. The refractory clergy thus became the most formidable opponents of the revolution, while the constitutional clergy (as they were called) brought it into the greatest disrepute by the looseness of their morals, and the impiety of their doctrines. To the doubts and anxieties to which the king, in consequence of his weak but conscientious character, had long been a prey, were now added the reproaches of his conscience for not having had the strength to protest against the violation of the ecclesiastical constitution, and the humiliation felt even by him who had submitted to so much, at having even his ministers forced upon him by the popular will.

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## CHAPTER XII.

The King secretly solicits the aid of Foreign Powers—Project of Mirabeau—His Death—The King not allowed to go to St. Cloud—His Remonstrance—Secret Convention with Foreign Powers—Flight of the King and Queen—Discovered and Arrested—The Royal Family brought back to Paris—Decree of the Assembly—Answer of the King to the Commissaries deputed by the Assembly—Republican Agitation—Decree preserving just the Shadow of Monarchy—Riots at the Champ de Mars—National Guards fire upon the People—Former Idols now execrated—Treaty of Pilnitz—Preparations for War—The Constitution completed—The King accepts it—Dissolution of the Assembly.

THE king, though now apparently determined upon taking some step to emancipate himself from the thralldom in which he was kept, still wavered between the different means held out to him. On one side he negotiated with the sovereigns of Europe, to whom he sent the Baron de Breteuil to solicit their aid in re-establishing his authority, and wrote on the 30th December, 1790, to the King of Prussia, 'I claim with confidence your support at a moment when, notwithstanding my acceptance of the new constitution, the factions openly show their intention to destroy what remains of the monarchy. I have addressed myself to the emperor, to the empress of Russia, to the kings of Spain and Sweden, and have presented to them the idea of a congress of the principal powers of Europe, supported by a strong army, as the best means of arresting the factions here, and of re-establishing a more durable state of affairs; and of preventing the evil under which we are suffering from spreading to the other states of Europe. I hope that your majesty will approve of my ideas, and will keep my secret inviolably\*.' On the

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\* *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution*, vol. x. Though the misfortunes of Louis XVI. give him the greatest claims to our compassion and our forbearance, one cannot help feeling indignant at seeing a king who has not ventured one courageous step to maintain his own dignity thus appealing to foreign aid.

other side, the connexion with Mirabeau, whose confidence in his own power inspired others with an equal idea of his importance, was more sedulously cultivated, and regular plans for the counter-revolutionary movement were concerted with him.

In the meantime emigration had increased to such a degree, that it was considered necessary to put a stop to it; but when the measure was proposed in the National Assembly, Mirabeau declared against it, and carried the victory by his usual audacity, though he could not prevent a decree from being passed relative to the residence of functionaries, in which it was declared, that if the king left the kingdom he should be considered as having abdicated.

But neither this, nor his being denounced in the Jacobin Club as a traitor, prevented Mirabeau from prosecuting his plan of persuading the king to fly to Lyons, to take up his stand there as a mediator between the emigration and the assembly, by giving a new constitution to the realm, which should consecrate all the great principles of the Revolution. He encouraged the king by assurances of having gained a party in the assembly, among the orators of the now all-powerful clubs, and among the administrators of thirty-six departments. The king at last acquiesced; Bouillé was made acquainted with the royal intentions, and the means of execution were being discussed, when death put an end to Mirabeau's career, on the 2nd April, 1791. His death was considered a public calamity, and his body was deposited in the church of St. Geneviève, converted into a pantheon destined to receive the great men of revolutionized France.

The death of Mirabeau did not alter the determination of the court to leave Paris, but it made its movements less decided, and gave a new character to the flight, which, undertaken under Mirabeau's auspices, would never have been considered as a complete breach with the assembly and the people, but which,

concerted with Bouillé and the emigrants alone, was, when it took place, regarded as nothing less than high treason to the state; for though the men of those days held very light the ancient laws of the monarchy, they required from the monarch very strict adherence to those they had imposed upon him.

On the 18th April the king proposed going to St. Cloud, (a summer palace in the environs of Paris,) to spend the Easter-week there, but the people, suspecting that this was but a pretext, assembled in great numbers round the carriage, and cut the traces. Lafayette was unable to disperse them, as his guards refused to obey his orders, and the king was obliged to return to the Tuileries, whence he repaired to the assembly, by which he was received with every mark of deference, to complain of the violence used against him. The partisans of the Revolution assert that the king sought every opportunity to make it appear he was under restraint; but though we may disapprove of the double-dealing to which Louis in his weakness too often had recourse, we cannot but see that the restraint in which he was held was so manifest, that there was no necessity for calling in the aid of false semblances.

This new outrage confirmed the king in his decision, by flight to regain an independent position, but to ensure success by lulling the people into false security, he descended to unworthy duplicity. He affected a greater zeal than ever for the Revolution, wrote a letter to his ambassadors at foreign courts, proclaiming his attachment to the new constitution, disavowing the intention of flying, which was attributed to him, and declaring all those his enemies who should doubt of his being in a state of perfect freedom; but at the same time couching his letter in such terms as to indicate that violence had forced it from him, and empowering his brother, the Comte d'Artois, to seek an interview with the emperor Leopold, who was then at Mantua,

to solicit him to concert with the other princes definitive measures to be taken in his favour. In this interview it was determined that thirty-five thousand Austrians should be marched into Flanders, fifteen thousand into Alsace, while thirty thousand Piedmontese were to move towards Lyons, and twenty thousand Spaniards towards the Pyrenees.

The emperor promised the co-operation of the king of Prussia and the neutrality of England\*, and a protestation written in the name of the house of Bourbon was to be signed by the kings of Naples and of Spain, by the infant of Parma, and by the expatriated princes. The greatest secrecy was to be maintained, and the king was recommended to remain perfectly quiet. Louis XVI. at first accepted the convention and determined upon acting in accordance with it, but there was a schism in the emigrant camp, and when Bretueuil, who belonged to the party which was not acting at Mantua, advised the king's flight, his advice was finally adopted, and Bouillé was apprised that the king had determined upon deferring no longer. The general, in consequence, drew together the troops he could best depend upon in a camp at Montmedy, a place upon the frontiers, where the king had decided to take his stand, and prepared everything in the best way to secure the safety of the monarch, giving, as a pretext for all these preparations, certain movements of the powers without. The 20th of June was fixed as the day of the king's departure. The queen, who always showed much more decision and dignity of character than Louis, had undertaken all the arrangements to be made on the route from Paris to Châlons, while Bouillé was to provide the means of safety from that place to Montmedy. Small detachments of cavalry were, under the pretext of escorting a treasure, to be stationed at short distances from each

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\* THIERS.



other on the route, and Bouillé himself was to meet the royal fugitives some distance in advance of Montmedy. The queen had found means of securing a secret egress from the palace, and the royal family were to travel with false passports and under feigned names. The greatest secrecy had been maintained, but by some unknown means a part of the plan must have transpired, as the national guard on service at the palace was doubled. But in spite of this redoubled vigilance on the 21st June, (the departure had been postponed for one day,) at midnight, the king, the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the king's sister, and Madame de Tourzel, the governess of the royal children, with her pupils, (all in disguise,) succeeded in escaping from the palace unseen\*. Madame de Tourzel and the children immediately got into a glass coach driven by Count Fersen, a young Swedish nobleman, disguised as coachman, and were soon joined by the king and Madame Elizabeth; but the queen, who was accompanied by a *garde du corps*, and was the last who left the palace, met M. de Lafayette's carriage, escorted by torch-bearers, and, endeavouring to escape notice, lost her way, and did not rejoin her companions until an hour after: an hour spent by them in mortal anxiety. When they were all safe in the carriage Count Fersen got upon the box, but he being also but imperfectly acquainted with the intricacies of Paris, more precious time was lost before they reached the Porte St. Martin and got into the berlin, drawn by six fleet horses, which there awaited them. Madame de Tourzel was supposed to be the mother of the family, under the name of Madame de Korff, and the king her

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\* The king's two aunts had left the kingdom two months before, but had been arrested at the frontiers until the National Assembly should be apprised of their intention. A great debate ensued, and was only ended by one of the deputies exclaiming that Europe would be astonished to find that the National Assembly of France had deliberated two days upon whether two old women should hear mass at Paris or at Rome.

*valet de chambre*. The berlin was preceded by three *gardes du corps* disguised as couriers and servants. During the night the royal fugitives proceeded unimpeded; and the Comte de Provence, the king's eldest brother, with his consort, in the mean time directed their flight towards Flanders, taking another route in order not to awaken suspicion.

At eight o'clock in the morning, Paris was still ignorant of the king's flight, but soon after the secret transpired and circulated with the rapidity of lightning. Lafayette, though despairing of being able to overtake the fugitives, immediately sent out three aides-de-camp in pursuit of them, taking upon himself the responsibility of the written orders which he gave them, and which were couched in terms as if he believed the king had been carried off by force. This supposition, which assured to the king more respectful treatment, was also adopted by the assembly\*, in which the moderate party now had the ascendant. The assembly calmly waited the issue of affairs, while occupied in the measures to be taken in the alarming crisis, but in the sections and the clubs there were uproar, and joyful acclamations; all the insignia of royalty were destroyed by them, and their organs the journals, in their usual coarse and infamous language, congratulated France on 'having got rid of an idiotic king, and of a wicked woman, who, to the wantonness of Messalina joined the bloodthirstiness of the Medicis.' 'Now is the moment,' proclaimed Marat in his particular newspaper, 'now is the moment when the heads of the ministers, of Lafayette, of Bailly, of all the rogues of the municipality, of all the traitors of the assembly ought to fall;' and when we remember the forty-four thousand branch associations of the Jacobin Club, of which these monsters were the mouthpieces, and where their sentiments found ready echo, we may

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\* THIERS.

form a conception of the spirit which animated France. The longings of the people of France were expressed in the hideous ravings of Marat, of Camille Desmoulins, of Danton, and whatever were the names of the ranters in the Jacobin and Cordelier Clubs, whose love of their country seemed to inspire them with nothing but a fierce hatred of all those, who by trying to maintain any kind of order, were of course considered as mortal enemies by men whose chief aim was disorder.

In the meantime the royal fugitives had proceeded on their way, without, however, meeting the military detachments which had been posted on the route to protect them. The people had expressed so much suspicion and uneasiness at the unexpected presence of them, that they had been obliged to withdraw, in order not to create danger instead of ensuring safety. Already at Châlons, the king, who had the imprudence to be looking out of the carriage window, had been recognised, but the mayor of the place being fortunately a staunch royalist, had prevented the person who made the discovery, from revealing it. At St. Menehould, fortune was less favourable, the king repeated the imprudence, and was again recognised, and this time by a fierce republican, Drouet, the son of the post-master of the place. He had not time to have the king arrested on the spot, but hastened on to Varennes, the next station, pursued by a brave soldier who suspected his intention, and hoped to detain him. But in vain; Drouet arrived at Varennes before the unhappy fugitives, and having apprized the municipality, instant measures were taken for the legal arrestation of the king. The latter protested for a long while, assuring the authorities that they were mistaken, that he was not the king, but when they insisted, and the dispute was waxing warm, the queen impatiently exclaimed, 'Since you recognise him as your king, then treat him at least with due respect.'

The king, seeing that farther dissimulation was

useless, now tried to engage the people present in his favour, and turning to M. Sausse, the functionary who had arrested him, he protested that he had not intended to leave the kingdom, but merely wished to place himself in a position where he could act more independently, then throwing his arms round Sausse, the unhappy monarch wept and implored him in touching terms, to save his wife and his children; and the queen, taking the dauphin in her arms, joined her prayers to his. Sausse, though moved, remained firm, and entreated the king to return to Paris, but Louis would not hear of this, and insisted on proceeding to Montmedy. At this juncture two cavalry detachments arrived, and the royal family thought themselves saved, but on learning that the king was arrested, the common soldiers declared that they were for the nation, and that they would not be accomplices in his flight. In the meantime the national guards in the environs had been summoned, and were gathered together in great numbers, and all hope was vain. The night passed in anxious suspense. At six o'clock in the morning Lafayette's aide-de-camp arrived with his order, and the royal travelling carriage was again turned towards Paris. Bouillé, who had been apprised in the middle of the night, of what had happened, had immediately put himself at the head of a regiment of cavalry, and spurred on by the anxiety that devoured him, arrived at Varennes an hour and a half after the royal family's departure, and found the town already prepared to resist his entrance. The bridge over the river that he would have to pass in order to follow the royal family, was also thrown down, so that the time that would be lost in overcoming these obstacles, made all hope of overtaking and rescuing the king vain, and Bouillé retired with a heart bleeding for his royal master. He immediately passed the frontiers, and when in security, wrote a letter to the assembly, generously taking upon himself the whole blame of

the king's flight, and threatening immediately to attack France at the head of a foreign army, in case any violence was attempted against the king's person.

When the arrest of the king was made known at Paris, the people manifested the greatest delight, and the assembly immediately deputed three of its members to meet the monarch and accompany him to Paris. The commissaries chosen were all of the left side; they were Petion, Barnave, and Latour-Maubourg. The latter followed in a carriage with Madame de Tourzel, the two former took their seats in the royal carriage, where Petion seems to have vented his patriotism in basely humiliating the unhappy family, on whose privacy he had forced himself; while Barnave's young enthusiastic soul, already moved to pity, by the sight of fallen grandeur, learnt in conversation with the queen and princess Elizabeth, to appreciate their noble characters and elevated minds, and began as Mirabeau had done before him, to dream of reconciling the king and the constitution. The queen, on her side, was charmed with the courteous politeness and real merit of the young deputy, and from that moment gave him her full esteem and confidence\*.

During the journey, which lasted eight days, the revolutionary spirit of the departments was strongly manifested; more than one hundred thousand national guards gathered along the royal route, to serve as escorts, and even the presence of the commissaries of the assembly could not protect the royal family from their insults and abuse. At Paris, where it had been placarded on all the walls, that 'whoever applauded the king should be beaten, whoever insulted him should be hanged,' they were received by an immense crowd, in threatening silence, and saved by the efforts of Lafayette and his guards from further outrages, they again entered the Tuileries, where, in consequence of a decree of

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\* MADAME CAMPAN.

the assembly, declaring that the king was provisionally suspended from his functions, he was for a time guarded like a state prisoner.

This decree had, however, not passed without violent opposition, two hundred and ninety deputies had protested against it, and had even refused to take part in the debate upon it, in order to render invalid the operations of the assembly, (30th June, 1791.) Barnave and the two Lameths had now entered into regular connection with the court, and Barnave himself drew up the king's answer to the commissaries, deputed by the assembly to interrogate him. In this answer the king gave as a reason for his flight, the desire of making himself fully acquainted with public opinion, and proved by numerous facts, that it was not his intention to leave the kingdom. Otherwise, this document contains a series of downright falsehoods, which being cleverly managed, has obtained for it, from M. Thiers, and other worshippers of the doctrines of expediency, the reputation of a 'master-work of cleverness,' but the lovers of truth, and true dignity of character, cannot but deplore that Louis XVI., who knew so well how to bear his sufferings, when they did at last come in their most fearful shape, should so often have condescended to unworthy means to help himself out of his difficulties.

Violent discussions took place in the assembly, upon the inviolability of the king's person, and the re-establishment of his authority. The moderate party had still the ascendant; the Jacobins, however, whose principles were represented in the assembly by Robespierre, Petion, Buzot, and a few others, would not hear of any re-establishment of authority or prerogative, but insisted that the king's flight was equivalent to an abdication, and that the assembly had now to proclaim his having forfeited the throne, and to establish a republic. It was the first time that the word was pronounced in the assembly, though things without, from

the very commencement, had a decided tendency towards it, this being one of the phases through which the state had to pass before it reached the complete state of anarchy which must inevitably follow, where the very foundations of the state are shaken, and where the system of levelling had begun as it had in France. Who was there in France to say to the people, 'so far shalt thou go and no farther,' when the people had learnt that no rights are inviolable, when brute force is predominant. The journals, the districts, the leaders of the clubs, were incessantly crying out, 'We will have no more kings,' and the Jacobins resolved to lay upon the 'altar of the father-land,' at the Champ de Mars, a petition to this effect, for signatures.

The assembly found itself surpassed, and returned to its monarchical ideas; the party headed by Barnave, Lameth, and Duport, who had hitherto directed the democratic movement, united with the centre; all those who were devoted to the constitution rallied; and though it was easy to foresee what would be the position of the king, replaced upon his tottering throne, without respect, without esteem, and without power, the majority hoped to save the constitution, by saving the royal authority\*.

It was decreed that the king should be denied the exercise of the executive power, until the constitution should be completed, and should be presented for his acceptance; that at that period his prerogatives, his constitutional guards, and civil list, should be restored to him, but if he should retract his oath, if he should put himself at the head of foreign armies, or should allow war to be declared in France in his name, he should be considered as having abdicated, should fall into the rank of a simple citizen, and should be liable to be brought to judgment for acts undertaken after this abdication.

The republicans were enraged at this decree, and en-

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\* LAVALLÉE.

deavoured to make the people rise; they persisted in signing their petition, though the resolution was now already passed, and formed menacing assemblies at the Champ de Mars, where several persons were massacred (17th July). The assembly summoned the municipality, and enjoined it to use all the means prescribed by law, to put down the riots, and Bailly and Lafayette, with his national guards, repaired to the scene of action, where six thousand signatures had already been affixed to the petition, and where they were received with insults and abuse. During several hours they tried in vain to appease the mad multitude, and were at last obliged to proclaim martial law, but their summonses were replied to by hootings and a shower of stones, and a pistol-shot was fired at Lafayette, for now the time was come, when the former idols of the people were in their turn to be broken. Lafayette ordered his men to fire, and after several lives were lost, the crowd dispersed, and the republican party were for a time intimidated, but the national guard soon began to regret having fired upon the people. Bailly and Lafayette were held up to execration, and Barnave, Duport, and Lameth, and all moderate men in the kingdom, were included in the same hatred with which the members of the Feuillans and the emigrants were regarded.

The most disgusting feature in all the ravings to which these continual denunciations gave rise, is the constant introduction of the words liberty and patriotism, in speeches replete with the grossest selfishness, and in which bloodthirstiness and love of rapine are conspicuous in every line. The love of their fellow-citizens, which these men, for whom no hypocrisy was too base, pretended to be the mover of all their actions and all their words, looked very much like the love of the vampire for the body whose blood he hopes to suck.

While things were in this state at Paris, the emigrants, whose hopes had risen with the king's flight, were struck with consternation, when Monsieur, his



brother, arrived alone at Brussels, and they got tidings of Louis's arrest. There was now nothing to be expected but from the assistance of foreign powers, who were willing to lend their aid; for the principles set forth by the French revolution were of a nature to enlist all monarchs against them.

The Emperor, the King of Prussia, and the Comte d'Artois, met at Pilnitz, where they signed a treaty on the 27th of August, which prepared for the invasion of France, and which was followed by a declaration, wherein the sovereigns, considering the cause of Louis XVI. as their own, demanded from France, on peril of their declaring war against the country, that the king should be liberated, and replaced on his throne, that the National Assembly should be dissolved, and that the princes of the empire having possessions in Alsace, should be re-established in their feudal rights. But this declaration, far from ameliorating the king's position, only still farther exasperated the people against him, and their hatred of their own king extended to all other monarchs, who were denominated tyrants, and were threatened with having their people revolutionized. The assembly prepared for resistance, the frontiers were put in a state of defence, one hundred thousand national guards were levied, and though a great number of the young officers of the line took their dismissal, France was not in need of defenders, for, however divided within, the revolutionary party had but one mind, as to resistance to foreign foes.

While occupied with these preparations, the assembly still continued its legislative labours, which were now approaching their termination, and the members who were weary and unsatisfied, and the people who longed for novelty and new excitement, looked forward to this termination with no small degree of satisfaction. It only remained to unite all the constitutional decrees into one body, in order to present them for the acceptance of the king, and then for the members of the

assembly to withdraw, in accordance with the decree of the 1st May, which declared that none of the members of the existing assembly could enter into the next one, or even receive an appointment from the king. In vain had Duport said on that occasion, 'Since we are glutted with principles, how is it that we are not advised that stability is also a principle of government? Shall we expose the French nation, whose temper is fickle and headstrong, to a new revolution, every two years, in laws and in opinion?'

It was too late then to speak of stability or common sense, the fiercest passions were roused on all sides, and the assembly bent before them, and left the work for which they had toiled, and which they thought sufficient to re-constitute the nation, to the guardianship of those, who being elected in the heat of the revolutionary movement, could of course only be the representatives of the fiercest passions, and the worst feelings of the people. It is the fashion among French historians, to denominate this renunciation of farther part in the government of the state, as imprudent generosity; it is sufficient to point out the folly of such an act, to prove that no motives of generosity (which in such a case as this, could only arise out of criminal ignorance) can possibly excuse it. Lafayette and Bailly were not behind-hand in this rivalry of 'generosity,' but also resigned their functions, when the labours of the assembly were concluded. The national guard of Paris was then re-organized, and in accordance with the principles of the day, no commander-general was again nominated, but the *chefs de légion* exercised by turns the functions, during one month.

When the constitutional decrees were all collected, it was suggested that they ought to be revised, but those who feared that alterations might be introduced, which they were nowise inclined to accept, protested vehemently against the revision, and the assembly was obliged to content itself by declaring that France had

the right of reviewing its constitution, but that it would be prudent not to use that right for thirty years.

The constitutional act, when completed, was presented to the king, who was then restored to liberty, and re-invested with his rights. After a few days' deliberation, the king wrote to the assembly; 'I accept the constitution, I pledge myself to defend it from every danger within, and against every attack from without, and to enforce its execution by every means in my power.' On the following morning he went in person to the assembly to repeat his acceptance of a constitution which he was not in a position to refuse, and the respect which was henceforward to be paid to the chief of the state, was shown to him, by his chair being placed on an equal line with that of the president, and by the assembly remaining seated while he got up to address them. For thus it had been determined before his arrival, 'because the king was only the chief functionary of the state, while they (the deputies) represented the state itself, and the sovereignty of the people.' When the president in his turn rose to reply to the king, and observed that the king remained seated, he again sat down, and delivered his speech in this position. The unhappy Louis, when returned to the Tuileries after this fearful trial, sank down upon a chair, and after covering his face with his hands, wept aloud, while the queen, throwing herself upon her knees before him, encircled him with her arms\*. But the people without shouted and exulted, every man feeling himself greater, because a fellow man who happened to be born to a throne, and to expectations of happiness and glory, had been made to taste the bitter cup of humiliation and human misery.

The period between this day and the 30th September, when the National Assembly dissolved itself, was taken up by fêtes and rejoicings, in which the

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\* MADAME CAMFAN.

unhappy sufferers were obliged to play a prominent part. On the 30th, the king again repaired to the assembly, to deliver another hollow speech, and when he had left, one of the deputies, rising, proclaimed with a powerful voice, addressing himself to the people: 'The Constituent Assembly declares that its mission is accomplished, and that it terminates at this moment its sittings.'

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## CHAPTER XIII.

Apparent Tranquillity—Composition of the Legislative Assembly—The King and the Assembly—Opposition of the Court—Pétion, Mayor of Paris—Efforts of the Royalists at Home and Abroad—The Emigrants refuse to return—Desertion of Officers from the Army—Decrees against the Emigrants—The King's *Veto*—Decree against the 'Refractory' Clergy—Encouragement given to the publication of Irreligious Works—Critical situation of the King—Increased by the Hostile Manifestations of Foreign Powers—The Ministers—Their Resignation—New Ministry—War decreed—'Patriotism'—Distress of the Queen—Discontent in the Provinces.

ANOTHER short interval of hope and joy ensued, when the Constituent Assembly ceded its place to the Legislative Assembly (the name assumed by the new chamber). There was a change and new swearing, and this always seemed to appease the multitude for a moment.

The constitution being the work of the middle classes, these, in the feeling of their strength, thought it inviolable, and forgot that there were still two parties in the state—those who had lost everything, and those who had yet everything to gain—who were not going to sit down in quiet content and veneration for laws which were but the production of the ambition of their fellows, and which, if one class could make, another could break with equal right. When the law of the land is despoiled of its sanctity, and becomes but the expression of the will of the people—when that will changes (and what is more fickle?) the law must change with it, and indeed ceases to be law. And so it was with this new constitution of France, which seemed to be so long-lived that even the king and queen based on it hopes of tranquillity and better days, but which did not survive more than a year.

The Legislative Assembly was composed of seven hundred and forty-five deputies, among whom were none of the *ancien régime*. Yet royalty had in this

assembly perhaps more sincere adherents than in the former one, for all those who were devoted to the new constitution clung to the king, as their safeguard against the republicanism of their opponents. The division of parties remained the same as in the Constituent Assembly, but the principles were different. Deputies of the right, and the extreme right, were generally denominated *Feuillans*, and those of the left, *Jacobins*. The *Feuillans* were the representatives of the *Bourgeoisie*, who were, as we have seen, devoted to the constitution, which was their work and their profit; they were supported out of the house by the National Guard, the departmental authorities, the club of the *Feuillans*, and Lafayette. Their most remarkable members were Dumas, Girardin, Lemontey, Ramond, Beugnot, Pastoret, Vaublanc, &c.; the extreme right was equally attached to the constitution, though not so persuaded of its perfection, and inclining more towards the king. What were the principles of the left may be learnt from its appellation of Jacobin, better than they can be described in distinct terms, for in all probability these men would have been at a great loss to define what was their object. This party was also called the *Girondins*, after those among its members who took the lead, Vergniaud, Gaudet, Gensonné, and Isnard, deputies of the Gironde. Among the other prominent members, were Brissot, who had made himself conspicuous as editor of the journal called *The Patriot*, and as orator in the Jacobin Club; and Condorcet, known by his philosophical works. These were supported out of the chamber, by Pétion, a cold and dissimulating republican.

The extreme left, occupying benches a little more raised than the rest, and taking from this the name of the *Mountain*, were the representatives of the multitude and of the clubs. Their principal orators were Bazère, Chabot, and Merlin de Thionville, and they were always ready to second the *Girondins* in any

revolutionary measures. Their chief allies without, were Robespierre, who now ruled over the Jacobins, and Danton, surnamed the Mirabeau of the populace, who was the presiding genius of the Cordelier Club, where he was supported by Camille Desmoulins and Fabre d'Eglantine. The Cordelier Club was chiefly composed of persons belonging to the trading classes, and was the ruler and director of the mob of the *fau-bourgs*, headed by the brewer Santerre.

The centre of the assembly was a weak and powerless party, and like all weakness tended to strengthen the bad. It voted most frequently with the left.

The first relations of the king and the assembly were anything but friendly. The deputation which was sent to the king to announce that the Legislative Assembly was constituted, was not received by his majesty in person, but was told by the minister of justice, that it would be received the next day. This was, however, an insult to the sovereignty of the people, which the new-born majesty of the assembly could not brook, and to retaliate it was decreed that the king, the hereditary functionary of the kingdom, should no longer be addressed by the title of Sire and Majesty. 'I am only astonished,' said one of the deputies (Gaudet), 'that the National Assembly should ever have hesitated as to whether it should preserve these titles. The word *Sire* signifies *Seigneur*, a word which belonged to the feudal government which no longer exists. As to that of Majesty it ought only to be employed in speaking of God, or of the people.' The decree was, however, very soon after again annulled; and, when the king appeared in the assembly, there was a show of good feeling on both sides.

The adherents of the ancient state of things, who, by not being represented in the assembly, were excluded from all open opposition to the Revolution, were thereby led still farther to attach their hopes to foreign aid, and are said to have used covert means from within to

push things to extremes, thinking that they would thus be afforded greater opportunities for resistance. This party regarded all the conflicting factions of the state with equal dislike, and hated Lafayette as heartily as it did Robespierre and Pétion, while, nevertheless, it did everything in its power to weaken the Feuillans, and to strengthen the Jacobins, 'because,' it is said to have expressed, 'in the day of its triumph it would have to reckon with the Feuillans, and not with the Jacobins.' Thus when the constitutionalists, who still adored Lafayette, proposed him for the mayoralty of Paris, the court was greatly adverse to his success, and preferred Pétion, to the great delight of the Jacobins, who saw in Lafayette a second Cromwell. The queen seems to have had a similar judgment of his ambition, as she used to say, 'Lafayette wants to be Mayor of Paris, in order to be Mayor of the Palace.' Pétion's election was an immense accession of power to the Girondins, and he used his position to subvert the constitution and the throne.

The royalists having gained nothing by the aid of the journals, and the frequenters of the gallery of the assembly, and of the clubs, which were in their pay, exerted all their influence to animate the religious disturbances, and were in this point more successful; for in Gévaudan, Poitou, and Brittany civil war was on the point of breaking out. Their measures were as hostile out of France. The Emperor and the King of Prussia, seeing Louis accept the constitution with apparent sincerity, had taken no farther steps, and had even given assurances of their pacific intentions. England seemed determined to remain neutral; and Spain, Sweden, and Russia, did not manifest any decided hostility. But the emigrants, nevertheless, continued their warlike preparations. The king's brothers protested against his acceptance of the constitution, which they asserted was a forced one, and the tide of emigration swelled in consequence. The



royalist journals boasted of the number of officers that had quitted the army, and of the fifteen thousand gentlemen that were assembled at Coblenz, and who were to be joined by four thousand foreign volunteers.

The king nowise approved of these vain boastings, and was fully alive to the danger to which they exposed him, in the midst of a suspicious people, of the clamours of the clubs and the journals, which were already speaking of treason, and in the face of an assembly which was stimulated to take measures which he was determined not to sanction. Besides, he was desirous that the emigrants should return, as that was the only means of rallying a party round the court, which would be sufficiently powerful to resist the other parties, or at least to keep them somewhat in check. But even a proclamation, issued 14th October, 1791, assuring them of the sincerity of his adhesion to the constitution, and engaging them to return home, produced no effect. They persisted in treating the king's orders as forced, and the emigration continued to increase.

When the minister of war announced that nineteen hundred officers had deserted from the army, the popular exasperation was great, and the assembly determined to take the most vigorous measures against the emigrants. The Constituent Assembly had limited itself to pronouncing the forfeiture of their places to all the functionaries who left the country, and levying a triple contribution on the property of all emigrants, but the new assembly had recourse to severer measures.

Various measures were proposed which were all violently combated by the constitutionalists, but the opposite party gained the victory, and it was decreed on the 9th November, that the Comte de Provence, the king's eldest brother, should be summoned to re-enter the kingdom within two months, under penalty of forfeiting his right to the regency. The French

assembled beyond the Rhine were accused of treason, and it was decreed, that if they were still collected in a body on the 1st January, 1792, they should be prosecuted as criminals and punished with death, and their revenues confiscated for the benefit of the state, without, however, prejudicing the rights of their wives and children.

The king sanctioned the first decree, but affixed his *veto* to the second, which gave great offence to the assembly, notwithstanding a new proclamation addressed to the emigrants, calling upon them to return to their duties, was issued the next day by the king; the populace and the assembly persisted in seeing in his non-acceptance of the decree, a proof of his sympathy with, and approval of, the assembly at Coblenz, and the king's authority to issue a proclamation was even questioned. The clubs were of course as usual violent and tumultuous. 'In refusing to sanction the decree against the emigrants,' said Camille Desmoulins, 'the king sanctions their criminal projects. . . . In a short time the nation will find itself placed between the necessity of allowing itself to be butchered or of disobeying, that is to say, of choosing between servitude and insurrection. The king's pretended sincerity is but derision.'

The assembly now directed its attacks against the counter-revolutionists, towards the refractory clergy, and were in this restrained by no religious scruples, for it was even more imbued with the principles of Voltaire, than the preceding assembly, and the Girondins did not pretend to conceal them, but expressed their belief in words singularly characteristic of the times: 'The Law is our God, we do not recognise any other,' they said; as if there could be a law without a God\*.

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\* The Pagans even, placed their laws under the safeguard of their divinities.

It was decreed (29th November, 1791) that the members of the clergy who had not taken the oaths required by the constitution, should be deprived of their pensions, which had been given them as an indemnity for the sale of their property; that they should no longer be allowed to exercise their holy functions, even in private houses; that they were declared suspected of entertaining thoughts of sedition, and were placed under the particular surveillance of the authorities; that if any disturbances should take place in the commune inhabited by a refractory priest, the departmental authorities should be bound to force him to change his residence, and the decree ended with a clause exhorting 'all good spirits to renew their efforts and multiply their instructions against fanaticism, in order to enlighten the people that they may avoid the snares laid for them by these pretended religious opinions,' declaring 'that the National Assembly will regard as a public benefit works and books written to the level of the country people upon this important matter, and will cause these works to be printed and distributed at the expense of the state, and will recompense the writers of them\*.' It is needless to add that France was soon inundated with works which, not satisfied with attacking the refractory priests, contributed to destroy all religion; and to add to the horrors of the Revolution, religion, which in men's minds always suffers for the faults of its followers, was brought into still farther disrepute by the conduct of the constitutional clergy, who availing themselves of the state of the public mind, and regardless of their vows, sought and obtained leave to marry, to the great disgust of all good Catholics.

The constitutional party were greatly opposed to those iniquitous measures, and fierce struggles took place in the assembly, which afforded an excellent

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\* *Histoire Parlementaire.*

opportunity for the display of the fiery revolutionary eloquence of the Girondins, many of whom, and particularly Isnard, were indeed betrayed into revealing more of their secret thoughts, than was quite consistent with their pretended love of liberty, for some of the measures proposed equalled if not surpassed in depotism and tyranny those of the most despotic of French monarchs.

When the decree was passed which presented these measures in a greatly modified character, the Directory of Paris implored the king to oppose it, and Louis, in affixing his *veto*, said that he would rather die than sanction such a decree. But though the king, in applying his *veto* to decrees in direct violation of the constitution he had sworn to defend, was acting perfectly in accordance with that constitution, he was nevertheless considered as a traitor by the people, who notwithstanding all their swearing and all their enthusiasm, now never dreamed of obeying any other law than their own passions.

His opposition to the decree regarding the emigrants, it was said, brought on foreign war, and his opposition to the decree concerning the priests, added civil war to this evil; and indeed such was the king's position, that every step he took must have been a false one. His resignation was not appreciated, and not thought to be sincere, and even the miserable semblance of power which the constitution had left him, was regarded with an envious and suspicious eye.

In the meanwhile the foreign powers, either excited by the struggles between the king and the assembly, or by the solicitations of the court, began to resume their hostile intentions. Austria, Prussia, and Piedmont levied troops; Spain and Russia threatened, and the King of Sweden, who had just obtained a victory over the powerful nobility of his own country, was anxious to lead an army which was to espouse the cause of the rights of kings. The alarm of the

‘patriots,’ and the suspicions against the king, augmented in consequence of these movements, and Louis XVI. endeavoured to appease them by issuing (20th December, 1791,) a declaration to the Electors of Treves and Mayence, intimating that if they did not take measures to prevent the assembling of emigrants, which was going on within their territory, they would be considered as enemies of France. At the same time he wrote to the Emperor to request him to use his authority with these two princes, and declared to the assembly that if these foreign powers did not afford him satisfaction, he would declare war against them. But the electors allowed the emigrants to assemble; the Diet of Ratisbon demanded the re-instatement of the *possessionary princes*, in Alsace; and the Emperor declared that if the electors were attacked he would support them. The king in consequence hereof, announced to the assembly that if the emigrants were not dispersed before the 15th January, he would have recourse to arms, and this resolution was highly applauded, and procured for a moment so great a popularity for the court, that the queen on going to the opera was greeted with all the demonstrations of loyalty she was wont to receive in her days of power and greatness. But this was the last time that any feeling of the kind was evinced. The desire for equality became every day stronger, and the journals and the club orators did everything in their power to teach the people to look upon the existence of a functionary of the state, placed so high above their level, as an insult to the dignity of human nature.

It was decreed in the assembly that the usual homage which was paid to the king on the first day of the year, a custom which was deeply rooted in the habits of the country, should be discontinued; and the assembly in their relations with the king continued to evince as little courtesy and respect as possible, while they exacted for themselves much more than they had

a right to expect. This was probably greatly owing to the little respect the courtiers were inclined voluntarily to afford them, for unfortunately this sad period shows us faults on all sides, and the courtiers were not the least active in preparing, by their misjudging zeal, humiliations for their royal master.

The first days of the year 1792 were occupied in animated discussions on the war, particularly in the Jacobin and Cordelier clubs, where, strange to say, Robespierre advocated peace, while the Feuillans on the contrary were all for war. In the assembly a decree was passed accusing the brothers of the king and the Prince of Condé of conspiracy, and pronouncing the Comte de Provence's forfeiture of his right to the regency, in consequence of his not acting in conformity with the decree summoning him to return. Three armies were raised and placed under the command of Luckner, Lafayette and Rochambeau, but the troops were disorganized and undisciplined, the officers disaffected, the fortresses dismantled, and the arsenals empty. However, measures to remedy these evils were undertaken with great ardour and no less confusion, and notwithstanding the resistance of the Mountain, which, fearing a war proposed by Louis XVI., prepared by the Feuillans and directed by Lafayette, maintained the same opinions as the Jacobins and the Cordeliers, war became the universal theme, and even the Girondins hoped that it might lead to some happy conclusion of the Revolution.

But the king, for whose support the foreign powers had alone taken up arms, continued to be distrusted, and was particularly obnoxious because by his two *vetos* he had stamped the acts of the assembly with illegality. Among his ministers, who were accused of intrigues against the constitution, and of correspondence with the emigrants, one alone possessed the confidence of the assembly: this was the young Narbonne, who had obtained his place through the influence of

the Feuillans, and was actively employed in reorganizing the army. But this minister, who was feared by the king, on account of his popularity and his ambition, was in constant opposition with the two other ministers, Bertrand de Molleville, a royalist, minister of the marine, and Delessart, minister for foreign affairs, who was accused of having suscitated the coalition against France, in order to intimidate the people. Narbonne was supported by the Girondins, but was nevertheless dismissed by the king, and the Girondins, who were anxious to place men of their own party in the ministry, then accused Bertrand and Delessart of treason. The assembly declared that the former, who was a confidant of the queen, and had taken many counter-revolutionary measures in the interior, had lost the confidence of the assembly, and Delessart, who was convicted of having professed unconstitutional principles in his correspondence with the Austrian minister, Prince Kaunitz, was placed before the high court of Orleans, (10th March, 1792,) which had been recently established for trying cases of high treason\*.

All the other ministers tendered their resignation, and the king, alarmed at the hostility evinced by the chamber, determined to choose their successors from the ranks of the left, which dominated in the assembly. He accordingly, on the 24th March, gave the war department to Servan, the finances to Clavière, and the home department to Roland, all three conspicuous Girondins, but particularly Roland, a well-informed, austere, and courageous man, who, however, owes his celebrity to his wife, whose ardent mind and enthusiastic republicanism, rendered her the life and soul of the party. To these ministers were joined Lacoste for the marine department, Duranthon as minister of justice, and Dumouriez as minister of foreign affairs.

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\* The term *lèse nation* had been substituted for the usual *lèse majesté*.

The latter was a man of considerable talent and great ambition, to gratify which he changed his opinion as often as he found it convenient; until this moment, however, without obtaining any prominent position. Hated by the Feuillans, amicably connected with the Gironde, and beloved by the Jacobins, he was the most important member of the new ministry, and he gained the king's confidence by his audacity, his coolness, his resoluteness, and his never-failing resources, and also because he persuaded Louis that he sought popularity in order to be able to save the throne.

On taking office Dumouriez immediately assumed a firm and decided tone in his diplomatic intercourse with foreign powers, and war became inevitable. Leopold of Austria, who was of a most pacific temper, had been succeeded by his nephew, Francis II., who had taken the title of King of Hungary and Bohemia, while awaiting his election to the empire, and who being young and warlike replied to Dumouriez's remonstrances by demanding the restoration of the French monarchy on the basis of the declaration of 23rd June, the re-establishment of the ancient orders of the state, the restitution of the property of the clergy, &c., &c. This was tantamount to a declaration of war. France was indignant, and the king repairing to the assembly (20th April), where Dumouriez read a report, exposing the progress and the results of the negotiations, proposed, according to the terms of the constitution, war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia. The proposition was received with acclamations, and a war was decreed, which for twenty-five years was to deluge Europe with blood.

We must now take a rapid view of the state of the people in Paris, and throughout France. Seeing that war was inevitable, Robespierre and his coadjutors, in order to meet all the dangers which might result to them from the events of the war, excited the people, both in their club-orations and newspapers, to arm,



proposing pikes as the weapon most suited to them; accordingly all the smiths were set to work, and hard work it was to satisfy the inpouring demands of the patriots for deadly weapons. To these arms was added, as an insignia, the red nightcap, which had first been worn by Pétion, and which bearing a resemblance to the Phrygian cap of liberty was considered a more worthy covering for the patriots of France than the hat, the vile badge of aristocracy, and the patriots from this period gloried in the name of *Sansculottes*, which was first given them in derision by the court. Pikes were not only made, but were brandished and exercised, and even the *Dames de la Halle* (the fishwomen of Paris) are said to have formed an Amazon corps, and to have exercised in the Champ de Mars. These military evolutions were mixed with the usual insults to the king and queen, which now seemed a necessary accompaniment to every demonstration of so-called patriotism, and the unhappy queen one day speaking to Dumouriez, said, 'I am in the greatest grief; I dare not approach the windows which look into the gardens: last night, I went to take the air at one of the windows towards the yard, a cannoneer on guard immediately apostrophized me in the coarsest way, and added, "How pleased I should be to see your head on the point of my bayonet!" In the hateful garden, I see on the one side a man mounted on a chair, and reading aloud all kinds of horrors about us; on the other side, a military man or an *abbé* dragged through one of the ponds, while he is covered with blows and insults; and regardless of all this, others are playing at battledore and shuttlecock, or taking a quiet walk. What a place of residence! what a people\*.'

This year is also remarkable for the introduction of

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\* *Mémoires de Dumouriez.*

the guillotine, which was to play so prominent a part in the government of France, when that government was directed by Robespierre, the same man, who when member of the Constituent Assembly, had proposed the abolition of capital punishment, because it was repugnant to his mild nature to see the blood of human beings flowing upon a scaffold.

While this instrument of death, the true emblem of the *tenderheartedness* of that period, and the invention of which seems as a foreboding of the reign of terror, was being introduced into Paris, and was decreed by the assembly for universal use, less legal weapons were being employed in the south. The inhabitants of Avignon did not approve of the revolutionary government which had been established among them, nor of their forced annexation to France, and in Provence and Languedoc the zealous Catholics continued to uphold their priests and to oppose the Revolution, and the most bloody frays took place among them and the *sansculottes*, who were as zealous in the cause of *their* creed.

The citizens of Marseilles were particularly noted for their revolutionary fanaticism, and they sent a deputation, headed by the young Barbaroux, surnamed *Le beau Barbaroux*, to express their sympathy for their fellow *sansculottes* of Paris, and their willingness to aid them whenever they should think proper to overthrow the tyrants of the assembly; for this body, in which voices were often raised to enforce order, and recommend moderation and even justice, had now become exceedingly obnoxious to the people.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

Opening of the War disastrous—Violent Denunciations of the Revolutionists—The Assembly violates the New-born Constitution—The King refuses his Sanction to their Decrees—Roland's Letter to the King—Dismissal of the Girondin Ministers—Dumouriez retires from the Ministry and joins the Army—Despair of the King—Lafayette accuses the Jacobins—Violent Proceedings of the Jacobins—Dreadful Procession of the Armed Mob—Their Petition to the Assembly—They rush into the Palace—Insult the King—At length retire—Lafayette repairs to Paris—His Offers to the King—Hopes of the Royal Family raised by the progress of the Foreign Armies—General Excitement—Debates of the Assembly—Exultation of the Clubs.

DUMOURIEZ, after having declared war, determined not to wait an attack within the frontiers of France, but to surprise Europe with the invasion and conquest of Belgium, which had always been an unruly appendage of Austria. The first movements of the French, however, were decidedly unsuccessful. The three columns which moved towards Tournay and Mons fled at the first sight of the enemy; and though the treason has never been proved, it is impossible to ascribe conduct so contrary to the brave character of the French to any other cause. Fortunately for the revolutionists, the Austrians did not avail themselves of their advantages; their generals committed several blunders, and remained on the defensive until they should be joined by the Prussians. As for the French, this event only tended still farther to augment their want of discipline, and Rochambeau, who commanded the three defeated columns, took his discharge. Of the two remaining generals, Luckner, who commanded the army which occupied the line from the Moselle to the Jura mountains, was a good cavalry officer, but by no means capacitated for the position which he then held, and Lafayette, whose army spread from Dunkirk to the Moselle, was absorbed by the struggles of the parties within; and the

hostilities without were limited to a few insignificant skirmishes.

The defeat of Tournay and Mons, which had filled the emigrants with new hope, had caused the greatest consternation among the revolutionists, and the Jacobins, who thought they saw all their fears justified, became daily more violent. During three years, Marat, the most hideous monster of this epoch, had not ceased to demand, in his newspaper, 'five or six hundred heads to insure the happiness and tranquillity of France;' and he now raised his voice from the deep cellars in which he hid himself from the persecuting eye of the authorities to renew his atrocious advice. 'The first thing the army has to do,' he said, 'is to massacre its generals;' and his words were listened to without disgust, because he and his fellows had filled the breast of every man with the most horrid suspicions against all those who held any powerful position, and this suspicion, joined to all the other wild passions that the Revolution had let loose, now evinced itself in constant denunciations.

Every movement of the court, of the refractory clergy, and of the king's constitutional guard\*, was translated into treason, by the newspapers, those vile and dangerous, but most powerful, instruments in the hands of faction; and the people, now armed, seemed more than ever determined to obey none but those who shared in their passions, and made them forget their own sufferings in the excitement of inflicting sufferings upon others. That there must have been most dreadful suffering, we cannot doubt, when we reflect that those who were wont, by peaceable work, to provide for the wants of their families, were now haranguing in the clubs, brandishing pikes in the Champ de Mars, listening to the exciting orations of

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\* It was chiefly composed of royalists, and had consisted of from eighteen hundred to six thousand men.

some street orator, or vociferating in the galleries of the assembly.

The assembly had now also come to the point when it found it necessary openly to violate the new-born Constitution. It declared itself permanent, and decreed—First, that the authorities of the different departments were empowered to pronounce sentence of transportation against refractory priests, on the simple denunciation of twenty citizens (27th May, 1792); secondly, that the king's constitutional guards should be disbanded and immediately re-composed, and that Brissac, the commander of this guard, should appear before the high court of Orleans, (29th May); and, thirdly, that there should be formed at Paris, on occasion of the festival of the 14th July, a camp of twenty thousand confederates from the departments, who were to protect the capital against the invasion of the foreigners.

This last measure was proposed by the minister Servan, without the knowledge of the king, and was intended still farther to strengthen the Girondins, who already, by means of Mayor Pétion, may be said to have commanded the capital. The king assented to the disbanding of his guard, but was determined not to re-compose a new one, though he thus remained entirely at the mercy of the revolutionists. To the two other decrees he resolved to refuse his sanction, and was encouraged in his resistance by seeing that they were immediately opposed by a part of his ministry and by a petition from eight thousand national guards of Paris.

The Gironde then determined to come to an explanation with the king, even at the risk of a rupture, and Roland, instigated by his wife, wrote a letter to the king, after her dictation, which, always supported by his wife, he insisted upon communicating to his majesty, notwithstanding the refusal of his colleagues to sign it, on account of its harshness of tone and want

of proper respect. After having explained to the king his position, arising out of the attempts made by the royalists, who relied upon the feelings which they naturally supposed must animate royalty, and having laid before his majesty a *tableau* of the Revolution, such as it was in the eyes of the enthusiastic woman who had dictated the letter, it urges the king to assent to the two decrees presented to him, because an open and sincere adoption of the Revolution by the king can alone save the country from incalculable woes. 'All feelings have taken the character of passions. . . . The fermentation is extreme, it will break out in the most terrific manner, unless a well-founded reliance on the intentions of your majesty can at last calm it; but this reliance cannot be established upon protestations alone, it must be based upon facts. . . . It is no longer time to recoil; there is no longer any possibility of temporising; the Revolution is accomplished in all minds, and will be realised at the price of blood, and cemented by blood, if prudence does not forestall the evils which it is yet time to prevent. . . . A short time more lost, and the grieving people will see in its king the friend and accomplice of conspirators.'

This letter was read by Roland himself to the king, who listened to it with great patience, but having consulted the queen and Dumouriez, (12th June, 1792,) immediately after dismissed the three Girondin ministers. But Dumouriez, upon whom rested all the king's hopes, also insisted upon the acceptance of the decrees, which the king would on no account sanction, and without which he said he could do nothing, and in consequence retired from the ministry and joined the army. This last stroke was more than the poor king could bear, and, despairing of his own fate, he fell into a kind of stupor, from which alone the tender entreaties and energetic remonstrances of the queen could at times rouse him. Madame Campan describes

him as having passed ten days without uttering any words, except the few which were necessary at the game of backgammon, which he played with the Princess Elizabeth in the evening.

The Girondin ministers were succeeded by Lagard, Chambonas, and Terrier-Monciel, of the Feuillans party, men who had neither intellectual strength themselves, nor a powerful party to back them, and whose choice, therefore, gave rise to the supposition that the king had given up all hopes of bettering his position by constitutional means. At this period the king did, indeed, send a secret messenger, Mallet-Dupan, to Austria and Prussia, to represent the necessity of the two sovereigns preceding their armies by a manifesto, in which they should declare that they had not armed themselves against the nation, but merely against a faction, and that they had in view no dismemberment of France, but merely adopted the cause of the legitimate government against anarchy, without pretending to impose laws upon any one, but that they would hold the assembly and all the authorities responsible for any violence offered against the person of the king\*.

The fermentation produced by the dismissal of the Gironde ministers was indeed such as to give rise to all kinds of fears. The Jacobins declared that it was the signal for the counter-revolution, and the assembly decreed that the nation's regret accompanied the ministers, and in violation of the promise given to the king by Roland, to keep his letter secret, it was sent to all the eighty-three departments.

The constitutionalists saw the storm preparing by the Girondins, and headed by Barnave, Malouet, Duport, and Lafayette, sought to gain the confidence of the court, with the desire of saving the throne. But the Feuillans were weak and disunited, and the

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\* BERTRAND DE MOLLEVILLE.

queen, though confiding in Barnave, continued her extreme repugnance for Lafayette, whose genius was by no means sufficiently strong to conquer all the difficulties which were thus raised between him and the fulfilment of his good intentions. Notwithstanding, however, the weakness of his position, he declared war against the Jacobins, in a letter addressed to the assembly (18th June, 1792), in which he says— . . . ‘It is this faction that has caused all the disturbances; and I loudly accuse it of this! Organized like a separate empire, led blindly by ambitious chiefs, this sect forms a separate corporation in the midst of the French people, whose power it usurps, by subjugating their representatives and their functionaries. . . . In order that we, the soldiers of liberty, may fight with success, and die for its benefit, it is necessary that the domination of the clubs should be annihilated by you, and be made to give way to the empire of the laws; that their usurpations should give way to the firm and independent action of the constituted authorities; that their disorganizing maxims should be superseded by the principles of liberty; and that their delirious fury be replaced by the calm and constant courage of a nation who knows its rights, and is determined to defend them. . . .’

But this courageous step only hastened the downfall of the Feuillans, who, with their devotion to the constitution, were placed between two enemies, the Jacobins and the royalists, and were doomed to be victims of whichever of these was victorious.

The Jacobins, determined upon having the decrees which the king had rejected, and still farther exasperated by the letter of Lafayette, now resolved to have recourse to an insurrection. The people, led on by its revolutionary passions, had at its head men who participated in these passions, without dominating over them in any other way, either by intellect or by more defined views. Such were Santerre, the brewer, who



commanded the faubourg St. Antoine; Alexander, who commanded a battalion of the faubourg St. Marceau; the butcher Legendre, the goldsmith Rossignol, Fourmier, Sergeant, and others, who, though mere mediocrities, possessed that brute courage and that reckless wildness which made them recoil before no excess for the attainment of their object, the destruction of those they called aristocrats, by which they, in fact, meant all those who were in their way, whatever their position. These men were connected with Robespierre, Pétion, Chabot, and other leaders of the clubs, the assembly, and the municipality; and, according to their advice, they resolved to march their armed multitude against the assembly and the palace, under pretext of presenting petitions, and of celebrating the anniversary of the day of the *Jeu de Paume*.

The municipality being asked if the mob might be permitted to appear in arms, refused; but Santerre, nevertheless, declared that nothing should prevent the men of the faubourgs from marching, and he encouraged his followers, by assuring them that the National Guard would not receive orders to act, and that M. Pétion would be there. Indeed, so little reason was there to fear the opposition of the latter, that, when the directory of the department invited the mayor to disperse the mob, he answered, 'That, according to the manner in which the executive power acted, it would not be astonishing if the public indignation produced some lamentable event.' The only precautions he took, were to order the commander of the National Guards to double the number of the men on guard, and to command the six battalions quartered in the two faubourgs not to leave their barracks. But the battalions with their cannon, and the multitude with their pikes, refused to obey the orders of the municipality, and on the 20th of June put themselves in motion towards the Rue St. Honoré, carrying with them standards, emblems, and devices, frightfully ex-

pressive of their wishes and intentions. Besides two immense tables, containing the laws, surrounded by dancing women and children carrying branches of poplar in their hands, there were a pair of old black breeches extended on a cross staff, with the motto, 'Tremble, tyrants; the *sansculottes* are coming.' On another staff was stuck a bullock's heart, pierced through by a pike, and with the inscription, 'Aristocrat's heart;' and many other sanguinary devices, intermixed with tri-coloured ribbons streaming as small pennants from the pikeheads.

When they arrived before the *Salle de Manège*, the assembly was in a state of great agitation, caused by Roederer, the procureur syndic of the department, having announced that a numerous and armed mob was in motion, and imploring the assembly to disperse it, according to the law that prohibited more than twenty citizens at a time presenting a petition. But Vergniaud protested against the scenes of the Champ de Mars being renewed; and as the assembly had before allowed petitions to be presented by armed troops, it was determined that the people should be admitted. Impatient at being detained so long, they rushed in before this permission could be intimated to them, but again withdrew on seeing the displeasure of the assembly. When they re-entered, their numbers had swelled to thirty thousand, who filed off in pairs, singing their frightful *Ça ira*, dancing and crying 'Down with the *veto*, Down with the priests, The aristocrats *à la lanterne*, *Vive les sansculottes*,' and brandishing their weapons and their hideous and ridiculous emblems, before the deputies, whose hearts sickened at the sight of the demons some among them had raised. Their petition, which was couched in the most audacious terms, repeated the sense of all the petitions of that epoch. 'The people are ready; they only wait for you. They are disposed to avail themselves of stupendous means to execute the second article of the decla-

ration of rights: *Resistance to oppression.* Let the small number among you, who do not unite in your and our wishes, purge the land of liberty of their presence, and repair to Coblenz. . . . Examine into the causes of our sufferings, and if they emanate from the executive, let it be annihilated.'

When the procession left the *Salle de Manège*, it was ordered to pass into the Rue St. Honoré, through the court-yard belonging to the building. Instead of doing this, they forced an entrance into the Place du Carrousel, in front of the palace, where they were arrested by the National Guards, but Santerre coming up with cannons, and the municipal officers ordering the doors to be opened, the crowd rushed into the palace, and ascended the great staircase, carrying in their arms a cannon. 'No obstacles, no resistance met them, neither at the entrance of the palace, nor in the apartments; not a man was there to defend them, not a National Guard at his post, not a door barricaded\*.'

The king was in his study, surrounded only by a few faithful servants and National Guards, who were begging him to present himself to the people; to this he had assented without any hesitation, when the door was broken down by the furious mob, before whom he appeared perfectly tranquil, saying, 'Here I am.' His servants and the National Guard were obliged to surround him to prevent his being crushed to death; and at last succeeded in placing him on a table in the embrasure of a window, before which the mob placed itself, brandishing its arms and crying out, 'Down with the *veto*, recal the ministers, give us the decree against the priests, the camp of twenty thousand men.' The butcher Legendre having obtained silence, said, 'Sir . . . yes, sir, listen to us; you are made for that . . . you are a deceiver . . . you have always deceived

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\* ROEDERER, *Chronique des Cinquante Jours.*

us . . . you are deceiving us; but take care of yourself, the measure is full, and the people are tired of being your toy.'

Louis, whose strength consisted in Christian submission, continued to show the greatest firmness and dignity, in the presence of these savages, who insulted him in every way, and menaced him with their arms, while he merely replied to all their clamours, 'I will do what the constitution orders me to do;' but the tumult continued to augment, and the king was at length forced to put on the hideous red cap of the Jacobins, to satisfy these wretches, who delighted in his humiliations.

The royalists maintain that the queen, who was in another room, was insulted in like manner, while those who endeavour to extenuate some of the atrocities of the Revolution, say that she and the dauphin were respectfully saluted, when the mob at last, upon Pétion's summons, filed off to leave the palace. 'Return to your homes,' said Pétion; 'by remaining here longer, you will give the enemies of the public welfare occasion to misrepresent your respectable intentions. Go, you have acted with the pride and dignity of free men.'

Unhappy creatures! it was such words as these, that made them the perpetrators of the most atrocious crimes! The palace was not evacuated before ten o'clock at night, but the king and royal family had, ere that, effected their retreat into their private apartments.

All that was left of good feeling in France, was deeply hurt at the proceedings of the 20th June. The whole of the constitutional party, a great number of the national guards, and the directories of seventy-six departments, protested energetically against them. From the city of Paris an address with no less than twenty thousand signatures, was presented to the king, and the directory of the department commenced a prosecution

against the authors of the insurrection, and against Pétion, who had almost openly supported it. Lafayette's indignation was extreme. Taking upon himself to be the spokesman of the army, he immediately repaired to Paris, determined to make a last effort to unite the court and the constitutionalists against the Jacobins. Presenting himself before the assembly, he alluded to his letter of the 18th, and expressed the indignant feelings of the army with regard to the violence and illegalities committed on the 20th. 'I implore the assembly,' said he, 'to order the instigators of those acts to be promptly punished, and to destroy a sect that usurps the sovereign power, tyrannizes over the citizens, and whose public debates but too clearly indicate the intentions of their leaders.'

A violent discussion ensued in the assembly, in which Lafayette was in his turn attacked, and accused of having left the army without leave; all that he could obtain was to have his petition referred to a committee. At court he was not more successful. The king received him with coldness, and the queen with her usual distrust, and whether it were that his intentions were suspected, or that his measures were not considered sufficiently powerful, his services were rejected. But Lafayette, who seems really to have been inspired by a sincere desire to save the king and the constitution, had interviews with those who participated in these feelings, and it was decided that if they could assemble as many as three hundred men, they would march against the Jacobins. On the appointed evening, however, no more than thirty persons appeared at the place of meeting, and Lafayette was obliged to return to the army without having effected any of his intentions. But being as devoted to the cause as ever, he continued to offer to the king the assistance of the armies under him and Luckner, whom he had entirely won. To all his offers the king merely replied, 'that the best advice that could be given to M. de Lafayette,

was always to remain the scare-crow of the factious, by exercising ably his profession as a general\*.'

The hopes of the court continued to be centered in the foreign armies, which now began to muster in more formidable array, Prussia as well as Piedmont having declared against France, and eighty thousand men being assembled at Coblenz, under command of the Duke of Brunswick, while Luckner and Lafayette, with their disorganised troops, left without reinforcements, were obliged to remain on the defensive. The royalist party exulted, and the queen who was made acquainted with all the intended steps of the emigrants, spoke with the greatest confidence of their approach, and said she should be liberated in a month†.

The excitement caused by the news of the march of the Prussian troops soon obliterated the remembrance of the 20th June, and the people, driven to extremities, seeing that no measures were taken by the government, prepared for new violence.

The greatest confusion prevailed throughout France. The constitution had already become an empty form. In all quarters the proper measures to be taken were projected and discussed, and the assembly, participating in all the fears of the people, was occupied in concerting plans of defence against the court. The ministers were questioned as to what measures the king had to propose in lieu of the twenty thousand confederates the assembly had judged necessary for the safety of the capital, and having answered by a proposal of levying forty-two battalions of volunteers, to form a reserve camp near Soissons, the assembly decreed that those among the battalions which would have to march through Paris on their way thither, should make a halt there, to take part in the celebration of the fête of the federation which was to take place on the 14th July.

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\* *Histoire Parlementaire.*

† MADAME CAMPAN.

By this artifice the assembly gained the point it had in view, when proposing the gathering of the twenty thousand confederates, for, as the king assented, an insurrectionary army was thus placed at its disposal. Still farther to ensure themselves against resistance, it was determined that the staff of the national guards of all the large cities which had shown a decided tendency towards the legal authorities, should be dissolved and re-elected (30th June, 1792), and it was proposed that, in order to quiet the popular mind, that the moment the crisis should become imminent, the Assembly should declare that the country was in danger.

The discussion of this proposition was opened by Vergniaud, in a speech calculated to widen the breach between the king and the assembly, and still farther to exasperate the people against the former. 'It was in the name of the king,' he said, 'to seek revenge for the dignity of the king, to assist the king, that the French princes had made the courts of Europe rise, that the treaty of Pilnitz had been signed, that Austria and Prussia had had recourse to arms. . . . All the evils which they endeavour to accumulate on our heads, all the danger which we have to fear, emanate from this source,—the name of the king alone, is the pretext for them—the cause of them. But I read in the constitution, "If the king places himself at the head of an army, and directs its force against the nation, or if he does not oppose by a formal act, any similar enterprise which shall be attempted in his name, he shall be regarded as having abdicated the throne." Having then examined what would be the nature of such a formal act, and having proved that the king had not taken any such step, still supposing that the king would defend himself by saying, that he had acted perfectly in accordance with the constitution, he added: 'Oh king, you have only feigned love for the laws, in order to maintain the power of braving them; and love for the constitution, lest you should be hurled from the

throne, where you wish to remain only to destroy that constitution; do you now think to deceive us any longer by your hypocritical protestations?' Having pointed out all the misdeeds he supposed the king to have committed, and all the wholesome measures he had left undone, he concluded, 'Man, whom the generosity of Frenchmen has been unable to touch, and whom love of despotism alone can warm, you are no longer any part of the constitution you have so unworthily violated, of that people you have so basely betrayed.'

This speech was followed by a still more violent one from Brissot, who, pointing out the dangers that threatened the country, said that it was in the Tuileries they must seek for the source from which they sprang, that it was there that the blow which was to save France must be struck. And he represented the nation as a mere puppet in the hands of the cabinet!

The veil was rent, no one could doubt that the next step of the Gironde would be to propose that the king be deposed, and the exultation of the clubs, and their party the mob, was indescribable, while the alarm of those who were peaceably inclined was as great.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Proffered Resignation of the Ministers—The Assembly declares the Country in danger—General enlistment of Volunteers—Preparations for an Insurrection—Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick—Flight of the Royal Family proposed—Rejected by the Queen—Insurrectional Committee—Marat—The coming Insurrection—Impeachment of Lafayette—The dreadful 10th of August.

ON the 10th July the ministers appeared before the assembly to expose the perilous situation of the kingdom and of the army, and to declare that under such a state of things, or rather during such a complete overthrow of all order, it was impossible for them to maintain life and movement in a vast body, every limb of which was paralyzed—to defend the monarchy against that anarchy, which threatened to swallow up everything—and that in consequence they tendered their resignation.

This resignation was not accepted, but the next day (11th July) the assembly declared *the country in danger*, and from that moment, according to a decree previously passed, all the civil authorities declared themselves in a state of permanent surveillance, all the national guards were put in movement, and amphitheatres were raised in all the public places, where municipal officers received on a table supported by drums, the names of all those who came to enlist themselves as volunteers, and which are said to have amounted to 15,000 daily\*.

The declaration of the assembly produced the greatest excitement, the whole nation was soon in arms, but persisted in seeing in the king and the court their worst enemies. The destruction of these was the main point to be accomplished, and six thousand confederates from the departments hastened to the capital, declaring that they would not again leave Paris before the

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\* THIERS.

enemies were crushed, and the assembly took every measure to second them, by removing all the troops both of the line and of the militia that could possibly protect the king, and by nominating an extraordinary committee to inquire into his acts, to decide whether they were such as to involve the forfeiture of his crown (*sa déchéance*).

The Mountain, which was now the ruling party in the assembly, prepared an insurrection, conjointly with the chiefs of the confederates and with the leaders of the Jacobin and Cordelier clubs, among whom were Danton, Desmoulins, and Santerre; and in which Pétion, who had been suspended, in consequence of the affair of the 20th June, but again reinstated in his functions, and the whole council of the commune had promised their passive co-operation. The vanguard of the insurrectional army was to be composed of the five hundred Marseillaise, who had acquired for themselves a great reputation for sanguinary valour, and who had introduced a civic song, which henceforward became the hymn of the Revolution, and is now known throughout Europe by the name of the Marseillaise\*.

In the midst of this effervescence, which was farther augmented by the religious disturbances, which were increasing on all points, the manifesto with which the Duke of Brunswick opened the campaign arrived; it was couched in the terms proposed by Louis XVI. through Mallet Dupan, and ended with a fearful threat against Paris, in case the nation did not return to its duty; this raised the popular fury to its greatest height. The whole people clamoured for the *déchéance* of the king. Pétion presented a petition to this effect to the assembly, loudly accused the king of treason, and called for the convocation of a national convention. Notwithstanding these threatening appearances, the

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\* The words and music of this song, which originated with the army on the Rhine, are the composition of Rouget Delisle, an officer of the Engineers, quartered at Huningue.

court remained in a state of incredible security. The king had disavowed any connection with the foreign powers, who had indeed exaggerated the instructions he had given, but his ministers attempted no means of resistance to the invading army, and the court repulsed the offers of assistance which were proffered on all sides. At last however the king, rousing himself from the torpor in which he was generally sunk, agreed to fly from the country in accordance with a plan admirably concerted by Lafayette, Lally Tollendal, (who had returned from England,) Liancourt, and other devoted royalists, and which offered every security; but the queen strenuously refused to commit herself to the hands of those who had caused her so much misery, and the whole plan was given up\*. New plans were then concerted by others, and while the court was busied with these hopes, and seemed sure of some means of escape, the people, intent upon their destruction, were only pausing for want of one chief leader, and of a pretext for breaking loose. The Jacobins had named a committee of five, known under the name of the insurrectional committee, the more promptly and secretly to devise measures. In this committee, which associated with itself all those men who had as yet made themselves most conspicuous by the fierceness and lawlessness of their principles, it was expressed that if the suspicion of having a deputy murdered could be cast upon the court, that would afford the most admirable pretext for falling upon the king; two deputies present, Grangeneuve and Chabot, immediately offered themselves as victims. The plan for their assassination was concerted, but when Grangeneuve, on the appointed night, arrived at the place of meeting, where the most fearful deed was to be committed for the most fearful purpose, Chabot was not there; and Grangeneuve's heroic patriotism quailed before the idea

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\* *Mémoire de M<sup>ons.</sup> Hue.* LACRETELLE'S *Histoire du 18<sup>me</sup> Siècle.*

of committing suicide in order to propagate a calumny,—so he went home\*. Can anything more frightfully depict the perversion of thought and mind—of every feeling of right and wrong, so common at this period, among a people still styling itself Christian?

Among those who were looked to as leaders, and among whom was to be chosen the great chief of the meditated insurrection, none presented so many qualifications as Marat. Camille Desmoulins, though cynical, audacious, and full of ardour, had neither sufficient vigour of lungs for a public orator, nor sufficient activity and strength for the chief of a party. Robespierre, though exercising a great influence over the Jacobin club, by the reputation he had obtained for incorruptible integrity, no one knows how or why, and by his eloquence which he gained by borrowing the thoughts and expressions of other men—Robespierre was not the man, for Robespierre was a selfish, cowardly, and even physically weak mediocrity, and he could not therefore lead into the field a furious multitude. Danton, with his athletic form, his thundering voice, his brutal passions, so fully in accordance with those of the multitude—Danton was a monster—a fitting worker of wickedness; but what is the instrument which executes, compared with the head that plans, and who could surpass the ‘atrocious intelligence’ of Marat? This man had first made himself known as writer of the paper *L’Ami du Peuple*, (the Friend of the People) and had by his atrocious provocatives to murder, awakened the horror and disgust of all those who were not entirely lost to all good feeling. At the commencement of the Revolution he was attached to the stables of the Comte d’Artois, as veterinary surgeon, and was then already an object of horror, from the frightful ugliness of his appearance. His short stature, contrasted painfully with the immense size of his head,

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\* THIERS.

and this disproportion, together with his fiery eye, his livid colour, and the disgusting slovenliness of his dress, made Marat indeed a loathsome object in outward form. But when the bonds that held the evil spirits of society in subjection were rent asunder, and Marat had revealed that his hideous body was the habitation of a soul as hideous, the man seemed transformed into a fiend, and the contempt, the horror, the disgust which he inspired, the dark caverns in which he was obliged to hide himself from the eye of justice, seemed only to inflame that insane love of one part of his fellow-citizens, which evinced itself by the most ardent thirst for the blood of others. The uncouth and wild-looking Marat in his filthy rags, with his contempt for all established rules, and his hatred of all established order, seems the hideous personification of this period of dark crimes. 'Give me,' said he, 'two hundred Neapolitans, armed with daggers, and a muff on their left arm for a shield; with them I will traverse France, and the Revolution shall be accomplished.' These words were listened to with a shudder, and yet how soon was he to find numberless accomplices in such deeds! But the moment was not yet come, and therefore Marat also was rejected as a leader.

In the mean time the people were openly making preparations for the coming struggle, and placards were stuck on the walls of Paris, threatening instant destruction to those who should dare to fire upon the people. On the 5th of August the section of the Quinze Vingts, which directed the others, determined to march; but on the representations of Pétion, who took an active part in all that was going on, though on account of his position as mayor, he was obliged to dissimulate, and who was aware that the court, acquainted with the intended movement, was prepared to resist the insurgents, this section determined to defer yet a few days, and first to issue an order, 'that if the legislative assembly did not on the 9th pronounce the *déchéance* of the king, if

justice and right was not done to the people, at midnight the tocsin should sound, the *générale* should beat, and all would rise at once.' Forty-two sections adhered to this order, and one of them, that of Mauconseil, even went so far as to pronounce the *déchéance* of the king.

These proceedings were made known to the assembly by Roederer, and the resolution of the section Mauconseil, was by it annulled, but the municipality withheld the decree from publication, and declared the sections *en permanence*.

On the 8th, the assembly, forced by the Jacobins, was obliged to impeach Lafayette; but struggling to resist the violence exercised over them, a majority of four hundred and six voices against two hundred and twenty-four, rejected the impeachment, and the furious people then threatened to murder all the constitutional deputies. These latter, on their side, declared 'that the assembly, degraded by the hissing in the galleries, and held under subjection by the factions, could no longer be considered free, and that they would no more attend the sittings.' All the deputies of the right then demanded that the federates should be sent away, but in vain, and the minister of justice announced 'that the laws were powerless, and that unless the legislative body afforded the most prompt assistance, the government could no longer be held responsible.'

The Jacobins, on the other side, proclaimed that the assembly could no longer be depended upon for 'making the Revolution\*.' 'No more addresses! No more petitions! The people must rely upon its arms, and its cannon, and itself make the law.' This was the signal for insurrection, and all flew to arms, but when the moment for action came, it was found that many of the heroes of the tribune were not anxious to win

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\* It is curious to hear allusions made to the Revolution on all occasions, as if it were a clear, definite, and even palpable object.

laurels on a field of battle. Robespierre had disappeared, Marat was hid by Danton, and Barbaroux was provided with a dose of poison in case of failure. Danton alone, whose courage and ardour grew with the excitement, thundered from the *tribune* of the Cordeliers. Having enumerated what he called the crimes, the base perfidy, and the hypocritical promises of the court, he added, 'The people can now have recourse only to its own means, for the constitution is insufficient, and the assembly has absolved Lafayette; there is thus nothing left for you but to save yourselves. Hasten then, for this very night, satellites hidden in the palace, will make an assault upon us, the people, to murder us before they leave Paris to join their friends at Coblenz. Therefore save yourselves, to arms! to arms!'

At this moment the report of a musket was heard, the tocsin sounded, the drums beat, and the insurrection commenced. The insurgents were divided into three corps, the first from the Faubourg St. Marceau, under Alexander and Fournier, the second from the Faubourg St. Antoine, under Santerre and Westermann; the third, which comprised the Marseillais, assembled at the Cordeliers. A blood-red standard, borne before the insurgents, had the following inscription: 'Martial law of the sovereign people against the rebellious executive,' and the chief plan of the insurrection was, that commissaries chosen by the sections, should unite themselves with the 'commune, and either with or against their will, replace the *conseil générale*, and devise means for saving the public cause.'

In the mean time, the court, trembling and undecided, though aware of the danger that threatened, scarcely knew what measures to take to avert it, and while some were advising resistance, others held the contrary opinion. At the very threshold of the king's door, the questions that were agitating the parties without, were discussed, and in a no less violent way.

The king was at supper, when a scuffle was heard at the door, and Madame Campan going out to inquire the cause, saw the two national guards on duty quarrelling and fighting, one having maintained that the king was acting according to the constitution, and that he for one would defend him at the risk of his own life, while the other said that the king impeded the only constitution that could suit a free people.

This was an alarming indication of the feelings of those who guarded the palace, among whom, indeed, there were many whose fidelity was but little to be depended upon. The most devoted servants of the king were eight or nine hundred Swiss, a gendarmerie composed of the former French guards, and about five hundred gentlemen who flocked to the palace in the hour of danger; but these were all looked upon with little liking by the national guards, who, with the exception of two battalions, were more devoted to the cause of the people than to that of the king. However, Mandat, who commanded them, and was warmly attached to the royal family, took the best measures for the defence of the palace, placing cannon in the three courts of the Tuileries, and stationing several battalions as advance posts, at the Louvre, the Pont Neuve and the Grève, with orders to attack the insurgents on the flank and from the rear. These steps were taken by Mandat on his own responsibility, for the mayor had, on the preceding evening, refused to give him any orders, or to allow him a supply of gunpowder. Had the national guards, the gendarmes, and the cannoneers, been faithful, Mandat's measures would have sufficed to disperse the disorderly mob of the Faubourgs, which could never have stood the attack of a well regulated force, but as it was, Mandat was soon summoned before the commissaires of the sections, who had taken possession of the Hotel de Ville, had suspended the *conseil générale*, many of whose members were in league with them, and had constituted themselves an *insur-*



*rectionary commune.* Mandat, thinking that it was a legal body before which he was called to account for the orders he had given, appeared, and was ordered to be impeached, and in the meanwhile sent to prison, but no sooner had he left the Hotel de Ville, than he was murdered by the infuriated mob without. Sauterres was immediately named commandant in his place, and the despair and confusion at the palace augmented.

The insurgents of the Faubourg St. Antoine, fifteen thousand in number, joined to five thousand from the Faubourg St. Marceau, having driven back the battalions stationed at the Grève and the Pont Neuf, invaded the Place du Carrousel, facing the Tuileries, and were joined by the gendarmes posted at the Louvre, while the cannoneers in the palace-yard, having unloaded their guns, saying that they would not fire upon the people, also took part with the multitude.

The queen and the princess Elizabeth had not gone to bed during that anxious night, but the king had retired to his room, from which he again issued at day-break, to count the hours, and to listen to the approach of those who were coming to drive him for ever from the palace of his ancestors.

At about six o'clock the beat of drums and the occasional firing of cannon, announced the fearful foe, and the king, advised by those who but little understood the character of the times, in spite of the prayers of Roederer, who well understood it, and urged the royal family to seek refuge in the assembly, the king chose that moment to go down and pass the troops in review. Even during the most loyal period, the French, who have so quick an eye for the elegant and graceful, would perhaps have found it difficult to be inspired by the sight of the unwieldy figure and undignified carriage of Louis XVI., and now that the bright halo was gone which surrounded royalty, there was a much smaller chance of his presence producing any effect;

and indeed, with the exception of a few shouts of *Vive le roi* from the two faithful battalions, he was greeted with looks of contempt and offensive words, and was obliged to retreat before the cannon in the court, which were now being levelled at the palace.

On the king's return, Roederer again urged the necessity of instantly repairing to the assembly, where the sound of the tocsin had called together the deputies. The queen, seconded by some of those assembled at the palace, who were desirous of fighting to the last, affected greater calm and courage than she felt, and insisted upon remaining. 'It is time,' she said, 'to know who is to be victorious, either the king and the constitution, or the factious;' and snatching up a pistol, she presented it to the king, telling him that now was the moment for him to show his courage\*. But the king, who was trembling for those that were dear to him, determined to follow Roederer's advice, and accompanied by the queen, his sister, and his two children, escorted by the *directoire* and some national guards, he repaired to the assembly followed by the shouts and insults of the people, who thronged round their passage.

It was eight o'clock in the morning when Louis presented himself in the assembly, the greater number of whose members were accomplices of the wretches from whom he was flying. 'I have come,' said he, 'to prevent the perpetration of a great crime, and I think, gentlemen, that I can be nowhere so safe as in the midst of you.' Vergniaud, who presided, answered that the king could depend upon the firmness of the assembly; and Roederer having described the tumult raging without, the king was invited to remain, and withdrew with his family into the box usually occupied by the reporters, while the assembly ordered twenty of its members to go out and appease the people. But no

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\* ROEDERER, *Chronique des Cinquante Jours*.

sooner were they gone than a discharge of artillery was heard, and the greatest consternation took possession of all present. The king immediately exclaimed that he had forbidden the Swiss to fire. The noise without increased: it was announced that the deputies sent by the assembly were dispersed, and one of the doors of the hall was soon attacked by the mob. A number of deputies rushed from their seats to meet the assailants, and then shouted, *Vive la nation! vive la liberté! vive l'égalité!* Shouts which by the royalists are imputed to cowardice, and by the partisans of the Revolution to the enthusiasm of the moment.

The multitude had found it difficult to form in any orderly array before the Tuileries; but led on by Westermann, formerly a corporal in a regiment of the line, and by the federates and the gendarmes, they had been enabled to break down the great entrance gate, had penetrated into the yard, where, as we have seen, they were instantly joined by the cannoneers stationed there. After the king had left, the Swiss guards stood at the windows of the palace, looking down upon the assailants, without any attempt at repelling them; and signs of an amicable understanding were soon interchanged between them, and the Swiss joined in the shouts of *Vive la nation!* The Marseillais then penetrated into the vestibule, and were ascending the staircase, when the report of a cannon was heard, and the Swiss, thinking themselves betrayed, poured a murderous volley upon those whom the moment before they were prepared to meet as friends, and then, descending bayonet in hand, drove the assailants before them, while the national guards kept up a brisk fire from the windows.

In a few moments the palace was cleared of the invaders, and fear and consternation prevailed among the insurgents in the Place du Carrousel, when orders arrived for the Swiss not to fire. At the same moment the federates had rallied the quailing insurgents, and a

fresh troop attacked the palace from another side. The devoted Swiss fell back, and for twenty minutes defended themselves against the attacks of the superior numbers; but seeing at last that resistance was useless, these 'heroic defenders of expiring royalty' sought to escape by different issues, but almost all perished in the attempt. Those that remained in the palace were massacred, and the victorious mob gave themselves up to pillage and carnage, and when their ferocious appetites were appeased they rushed from the palace to the assembly, carrying with them their arms, their pillage, and their prisoners, and shouting furiously for the *déchéance* of the king, which the assembly, now as greatly feared and detested as the king, was obliged to pronounce.

The end to which had tended every movement, every word, every thought, since the first opening of the States-General, was now attained. Anarchy was legalized, and the last vestige of the ancient state of things destroyed. And now that this long-sighed-for *liberty* is attained, at the price of so many crimes, we are to see how it is used by the *sovereign people*, and what virtues are developed under its shadow.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Decrees of the Assembly—Sovereignty of the Commune—Measures passed by that Body—The heads of the Commune—A Tribunal formed for trying offences against the People—Laws passed against the Emigrants and the Priests—The Foreign Ambassadors leave Paris—The Foreign Armies cross the Frontiers—Lafayette declared a Traitor—Unlawful proceedings of the Commune—Verdun taken—Alarm in Paris—The Massacre—Circular of the Commune—Frightful Picture—Election of Members for the Convention—Movements of the Army—Prompt Measures of Dumouriez—Battle of Valmy—Retreat of the Prussians—General Success of the French Arms.

WHILE the royal family, shut up in the close box of the reporters, were obliged to be quiescent spectators of the work of demolition going on in the assembly, the Girondins, who seem still to have been under the impression that they had been the gainers by the scenes which had just been enacted, and that they were to be the rulers of the new republic, passed the following decrees: ‘Considering that the dangers which threaten the country are now most imminent; that they principally arise out of the distrust felt by the people for the chief of the executive power, on account of his conduct with regard to a war commenced in his name against the constitution, and the independence of the nation; that the legislative body, in the circumstances in which it has been placed by events unforeseen by the laws, cannot reconcile its fidelity to the constitution, with its determination to perish under the ruins of the temple of liberty, except by having recourse to the sovereignty of the people; the National Assembly decrees:—that the French people is invited to form a national convention; that the chief of the executive power is provisionally suspended from his functions until the national convention shall have pronounced on the measures to be adopted to ensure the sovereignty of the people, and the reign of liberty and equality. That the king and his family are to inhabit the palace

of the Luxembourg, and shall be placed under the guard of the citizens and of the law. That the present ministers are dismissed, and that those that are to replace them are to be provisionally named by the assembly; that the decrees already passed, but which have not been sanctioned, shall be binding as laws. That the assembly declares itself, *en séance permanente*.'

But the assembly had soon to learn, that notwithstanding the downfall of the monarch, there was still a power in the state superior to its own, and that though bearing the title of the supreme legislative body, nothing now remained for it but to follow the dictates and legalize the acts of the 'commune,' created by the insurgents. Even before the combat at the Tuileries was over, it had declared by the voice of Danton, that, with regard to the extraordinary measures it had been obliged to have recourse to, it would recognise no other judge than the people, assembled in the *primary assemblies*, and the assembly, in accordance with its wishes, approved of all its acts; declared that all Frenchmen, without exception, who had attained the age of one-and-twenty, should be *acting* citizens, and that all police regulations, with regard to measures of safety against the internal as well as the external foreign foes, should be left to the municipality. Commissaries, charged with enforcing the acceptance of the new revolution, and with changing the civil and military authorities, were sent to the departments and to the armies, and Roland, Clavière, and Servan, were reinstated in office, together with Monge Lebrun and Danton, the latter as minister of justice.

The commune had not awaited the decrees of the assembly, but displaying the most extraordinary activity, it passed about two hundred *arrêtés* a day, and usurping all power and all rights, respected none in others. It suspended the directory of the department, it transferred Louis XVI. and his family to the Temple, where these unhappy sufferers, who had been born and

reared in the most sumptuous courts of Europe, were exposed to every privation, to every hardship, and to every indignity. It threw the royalist journalists into prison, and distributed their printing machines among its own creatures, to be used for disseminating its execrable principles. It ordered the demolition of all the historic monuments of France, because they 'recalled to the mind the state of slavery in which the people had lived,' and it named a committee of surveillance which ruled the capital through the most despotic police, and which resumed within itself all the usurpations, and all the excesses of the commune\*.

The power of the mayor was completely annulled, and the whole administration changed. 'The general council,' says Pétion, one of those men who from promoters of these excesses, became their victims, 'the general council had become a political body, regarding itself as invested with full powers, discussing the existing laws, and promulgating new ones, its constant themes were the plots it supposed existing against liberty; citizens were denounced and condemned. All deliberations were carried on with the impetuosity of enthusiasm; night and day the council held its sittings.' The members of this council were by no means the *élite* of the population of Paris; almost all of them belonging to the lower classes, void of convictions as of honesty, ignorant and brutal, and full of envy and hatred for those who were superior to them in education as well as in birth and riches. At their head were Danton, Robespierre, and Marat,—Marat who had long sighed for a dictatorship, not for the pleasure of being all powerful, but to be intrusted with the task of purifying society. 'The dictator,' he said, 'ought to have a cannon-ball attached to his leg†, in order always to be under the hands of the people; he ought to be

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\* LAVALLÉE.

† This is the way in which the galley slaves are prevented from escaping.

allowed one faculty alone, that of indicating the victims, and of ordering as their only punishment, death.' When we add to this, Danton's maxim, that all that was possible was lawful, and Robespierre's envious but cowardly disposition, and the sanguinary fierceness of Billaud Varrennes, and Collot d'Herbois, who also belonged to the commune, the atrocity of the crimes committed by this body, in the name of justice and liberty, can no longer astonish us.

The assembly, or rather the Girondins—for since the commencement of the insurrection, not a voice had been heard from the benches of the right, and the Mountainists were identified with the insurrectionary commune—the Girondins, greatly alarmed at the increasing usurpations of this body, sought to counteract its power, by decreeing the re-establishment of the directory of Paris, but the commune opposed the measure, and threatened that if the assembly persisted in re-instating that 'aristocratical body, the people would again arm itself with vengeance.' The assembly then modified its decree, and limited the power of the directory to the mere collecting of taxes; and farther coerced by the commune, it decreed the formation of an extraordinary tribunal, whose members were to be chosen by the sections, and against whose decisions there should be no appeal, to sit in judgment upon the traitors and conspirators whose designs had been frustrated by the people on the 10th August. On the 23d of this month, it was decreed that the property of the emigrants should be expropriated, that the dissentient priests who did not voluntarily leave the country, should be transported to Guiana, and that the municipalities were authorized to visit the houses of all citizens, to ascertain that they did not contain arms, and to arrest the suspected.

In the mean time, all the ambassadors from foreign courts had left Paris, and France was considered at war with the whole of Europe, but as yet Austria,



Prussia, and Piedmont alone, had come into the field. On the 19th August, sixty thousand Prussians crossed the frontiers, while twenty thousand Austrians marched towards Stenay, and twenty-five thousand imperial troops were directed towards Thionville and Montmedy. France had ninety-six thousand men in arms, to meet these armies, but the troops were undisciplined, and commanded by officers whose fidelity was but little to be depended upon, while the generals were without renown. The insurrection of the 10th August, had added to the confusion and weakness of the army, by dividing opinions, for while Lafayette and Luckner, who acted upon his friend's suggestion, repudiated the insurrection, and were even preparing to march against Paris, Dumouriez and his detachment of the army recognised the legality of the popular movement. The assembly declared Lafayette a traitor to his country, and, abandoned by all his supporters, the man who had so lately been the idol of France, was obliged to fly his country. He was arrested at one of the enemies' advance posts, and treated as a prisoner of war; and was for five years dragged from dungeon to dungeon.

Dumouriez was named to the command of the army of the North in his place, and Kellermann to that of the East, in the place of Luckner; but on the 20th August Longwy was invaded by the surrounding Prussians, and it capitulated on the 24th. On the 30th the enemy arrived before Verdun, surrounded it, and commenced the bombardment. In case this place was taken, the road to the capital lay open, and nothing could exceed the excitement which prevailed at Paris on the reception of this news, and of the capture of Longwy. Already at the first appraisal of the success of the allies, of the defection of Lafayette, and of the revolt of La Vendée, where, on the 22nd August, the peasantry who adhered to the royal cause had taken possession of the town of Chatellon-sur-Sèvres, the assembly had taken prompt measures to prevent

farther defection, to strengthen Paris, and had endeavoured to free itself from the subjection of the commune. But in vain; this latter body also prepared means of defence, which were quite in keeping with the character of the personages who composed it, and but too fearfully adapted to prove that no despotism is worse than that of unlawful usurpers, because, conscious of the instability of their power, and of the enmities they must excite, they see no salvation but in the tyranny which paralyzes all resistance, by means of the fear which it inspires. On the 29th and 30th of August the barriers were closed, carriages arrested, the streets deserted, and the commissaries of the commune, escorted by the armed sections, rendered their domiciliary visits. Every citizen who was found from home was declared suspected, and between three and four thousand individuals, nobles, ecclesiastics, people formerly belonging to the court, national guards, &c., were thrown into prison.

The executive council, composed of the ministers, were then called to the committee for general defence, to deliberate upon the measures to be taken, in this critical juncture. Some voted for waiting until the Prussians should appear under the walls of Paris, others proposed to retire to Saumur\*. Danton vehemently opposed the last proposition. 'To recoil,' said he, 'is to destroy ourselves. We must maintain ourselves here by all means, and save ourselves by boldness. We must *frighten* the royalists!' And he accompanied these last words with a gesture that made his auditors shudder. But Danton repeated his words, and detailed his plan for striking the enemy with terror, and by making the multitude his accomplices, leaving them no hope nor refuge but in victory. All the citizens who were fit to carry arms were enrolled in regiments in the Champ de Mars, and were sent to

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\* MIGNET.

the frontiers on the 1st September; and on the 2nd, when the news of the taking of Verdun arrived, the commune seized the moment when Paris was in the greatest alarm, thinking that the enemy was already at the gates, to execute its terrible designs.

It was Sunday, but no Sabbath stillness reigned in Paris. Unholy passions raged in the hearts of the citizens, and unholy sounds rent the air. Confusion and terror produced their direst effects. Again Danton declared that boldness, and nothing but boldness, could save revolutionized France; and the commune, for whose measures he was preparing the way, replied to his appeal by cries of 'To arms, citizens, to arms, the enemy is at our gates.' Alarm guns were fired, the tocsin sounded, the roll of the drums was heard, and the barriers were closed; the whole town was in movement, and in the streets; some of the inhabitants, glowing with martial ardour, were hurrying to join the army, others tendered their services to work in the camp erected at Montmartre, while others moved about in disorderly and idle groups, terrified at all that surrounded them, and but too well prepared to believe in any atrocity which should be reported of those whom they so much feared—the members of the commune were abroad. Suddenly the report was spread that the royalists were marching against the prisons, to set the prisoners free, and then to deliver up the town to the Prussians. The train was fired. Three sections immediately decreed the death of all the prisoners, and in one instant the terrible cry, 'Let us to the prisons,' was heard from one end of Paris to the other—in the streets, in the public places, in the clubs, and even in the assembly. 'Let not one of our enemies survive to rejoice at our misfortunes, and to take vengeance on our wives and children,' cried one of the wild orators of the times, and these words, re-echoed on all sides, led to the result which they premeditated.

In the meantime, the intended victims were not

without forebodings of the fate which awaited them, for measures had been taken to prevent the possibility of resistance, which could not have escaped their notice. The gaolers in the different prisons all seemed labouring under intense anxiety: the one in the Abbaye had sent his wife and children from home early in the morning. All the prisoners had had their dinner (strange proof of the power of habit over the human mind) before the usual hour, and the knives were wanting for every cover.

The wild beasts were now goaded into fury, and the moment for letting loose their victims had arrived. Four-and-twenty priests, who had been detained at the Hotel de Ville on account of their having refused to take the required oaths, were now placed in hackney coaches, and conveyed to the prison of the Abbaye, escorted by a detachment of Marseillais confederates, who pointed them out to the surrounding mob, as the conspirators who were to have murdered their wives and their children, while they were sent to the frontiers. The unhappy prisoners tried to escape the insults and blows which were in consequence levelled against them, by putting up the glasses of the carriage; but this frail barrier was of no avail against their assailants, and they were made to suffer slow torture, until arrived in the yard of the Abbaye, where they were received by a still more furious multitude, headed by Maillard, who, as the carriages came up, and the victims attempted to descend, received them with the points of their pikes, until, with one exception\*, the twenty-four priests lay dead upon the ground. At this moment Billaud Varennes, the chief instigator of these inhuman acts, appeared in the midst of the murderers, and harangued them in the following words: 'People, you are immolating your enemies,—you are doing

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\* The priest miraculously saved from the carnage was the Abbé Sicard, the instructor of the deaf and dumb.

your duty;' to which fearful blasphemy Maillard replied, 'There is nothing more to be done here, let us on to the Carmelites.' And to the church of the Carmelites they went, where two hundred priests had been incarcerated; and there, on the steps of the altar, they struck their victims, who died in a spirit worthy of the place. After having made use of their sabres, the assassins had recourse to their fire-arms, and made a general discharge into the body of the church, in the garden, at the walls, and at the trees, by climbing which some of their victims had sought safety\*.

While this work was going on, Maillard returned to the Abbaye, and addressing himself to the section of the Quatre Nation, which held its sittings in one of the halls, he demanded 'wine for the brave workmen who were delivering the nation from its enemies;' the trembling committee complied with his demand. Strengthened by their draught the vile wretches then attacked the prison, and, dragging the prisoners from their cells, immolated them without distinction.

But suddenly some one of this horrid assembly of assassins, mounting upon a stool, represents to his comrades the injustice and irregularity of their proceedings; and then ensued one of those monstrous scenes which render the history of this period more disgusting than any other, where the most atrocious sinners, assuming a mocking semblance of justice and law, sat in judgment upon those whom they were previously determined to sacrifice. Maillard was chosen as president of the impromptu tribunal, and placing the gaoler's book before him, the prisoners were called over according to the order in which they were there inscribed, and having been submitted to a short interrogatory, were, with a very few exceptions, handed over to the cold-blooded executioners who awaited them without, to

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\* THIERS.

consummate the frightful deed. In order to avoid the scenes of despair which were likely to ensue, and which even these heartless miscreants seem to have been unwilling to witness, it was proposed that the sentence of death should be understood by the words : '*Monsieur, à la Force\**!' The first victims at the Abbaye were the Swiss guards, and among the others was Thierry, the valet de chambre of Louis XVI., whom Maillard handed over to his doom, with the words, 'As the master, so are his lacqueys.'

While these horrid scenes were going on, the commune openly sent some among its members to recommend moderation and calmness to the people, while others secretly added fuel to the fire, and the words of all those who were sincerely desirous of putting a stop to the atrocities, fell unheeded upon the ears of the assassins, whose appetites increased with the blood on which they glutted.

For four days and nights this hideous work went on, and so completely was it looked upon as a kind of business by those who took part in it, as well as by those who belonged to them, that the women used to speak of carrying dinner to their husbands, 'who were working at the prisons,' as if they were speaking of any other kind of work. At the prison of La Force, the fearful tribunal was headed by Hébert, himself a member of the commune, and here the clemency which was shown to some is almost more revolting than the cruelty shown to others. Mademoiselle de Sombrueil, the daughter of the venerable governor of the Invalides, who was among the prisoners, pleaded with such touching love and despair for the life of her parent, that even these human hyenas relented ; but as if ashamed of their humanity, they tinged it with their ferocity, by presenting to the young girl a goblet filled with human blood, and forcing her to drink the 'blood of the aris-

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\* La Force was one of the prisons of Paris.

tocrats,' as the price of her father's life. Another lovely woman, as celebrated for her virtues as for her beauty, and whose only crime was devotion to the queen, met with a less happy fate; she was dragged half dead before the executioner, decked with the municipal scarf, who asked in a ferocious tone who she was. 'Louisa of Savoy, princess of Lamballe,' was the reply, and having then been told that she had taken part in all the plots of the court, she was bidden to swear to love liberty and equality, and to hate the king, the queen, and all royalty. 'I will take the first oath,' replied this interesting woman, 'but the second I cannot, for those feelings are not in my heart,' and the vile wretches, who were incapable of appreciating the Christian heroism of this reply, gave the signal for the murder of the innocent woman; the furious mob, not satisfied with this, tore her body to pieces, and placing her head, her heart, and her lacerated limbs on their pikes, they cried out that they must 'carry them to the foot of the throne,' and rushed with them to the Temple, where the royal family counted the hours that rolled over their heads in indescribable misery, and agonizing uncertainty. Attracted by the noise in the street, the queen was hastening to the window, when she was held back by some of the guards, one of whom, however, had the cruelty to tell her what was passing in the street. The unhappy princess fell senseless into the arms of the king and the princess Elizabeth, who watched her in speechless agony, while the multitude without continued their fierce shouts.

The shuddering friend of humanity asks where were the authorities, while these atrocious scenes were going on, and whether, among five hundred thousand inhabitants of Paris, there were not a sufficient number of feeling beings to put down five or six hundred assassins? History must leave the answer to philosophy.

When the prisons were emptied, the commune acknowledged its part in the deed, by paying the exe-

cutioners; and seven of its members, forming the committee of surveillance, sent the following circular to all the communes of France:—‘Having learnt that barbarous hordes were marching against Paris, the commune of Paris hastens to inform its brothers in all the departments, that a portion of the fierce conspirators, who were detained in the prisons, have been put to death by the people, an act of justice which seemed to be indispensable, in order to strike terror into the legions of traitors who were within the walls, at the moment when the citizens were to march against the enemy; and certainly the entire nation will not hesitate, after the series of betrayals which have conducted it to the brink of a precipice, to adopt this useful and necessary measure, and all Frenchmen will say to themselves as did the Parisians,—We are to march against the enemy, and we will not leave behind us brigands who may murder our wives and our children\*.’ But as yet the atrocity of Paris was not equalled by the rest of France; and four towns only, Meaux, Reims, Lyons, and Orleans, followed the horrible advice. At Versailles, the municipal authorities did in vain everything in their power to save a transport of prisoners escorted by five hundred Marseillais volunteers, who passed through their town on their way to Paris, and were there massacred by the escort. Among the victims who thus perished were the Duke of Brissac and the ex-minister Delessart.

Not content with the little effect produced by its circular, the commune of Paris, which may now be considered as the governing body in France, sent commissaries throughout the country, to exhort the people to follow its example; it ruled the elections for the convention which were now going on, while it favoured every kind of illegality, and gave itself up to the most

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\* The members who signed this circular were Duplain, Panis, Sergent Leafont, Marat, Dufort, Jourdeuil.



frightful excesses. The public funds were robbed, the Garde Meuble, containing the regalia and many other treasures, was pillaged, and national property devastated; and the patriotic members of the commune paid themselves, at the expense of the people, for the crimes they had committed in its name. This most hideous democracy disposed of the life and property of the citizens. The prisons were filled with those that were suspected. Common robbers were allowed free scope; and some were seen in the public walks, snatching their trinkets from the women, in order, they said, to lay them on the altar of the fatherland\*. Every legal power was disorganized, and the most fearful anarchy reigned unrestrained.

The Girondins, despairing and disgusted at what they saw going on around them, endeavoured in vain to stop the excesses of 'these brigands, decked with the municipal scarf.' 'The Parisians,' said Vergniaud, who denominated the massacre in the prisons 'a butchering of human flesh,'—'the Parisians are no longer the slaves of crowned tyrants, but of the vilest of men, of the most detestable of villains. It is time to break these shameful fetters, to crush this new tyranny. . . . May the memory of the National Assembly perish, if it leaves unpunished a crime which will place an ineffaceable blot upon the name of the French, if its rigorous measures do not prove to the nations of Europe that, in spite of the calumnies with which they seek to debase France, there is yet, and even in the midst of the momentary anarchy into which some brigands have plunged us, that there is still in our country some virtue left, and that humanity has not ceased to be honoured there!' But the eloquence which had contributed to raise the devastating hurricane that was sweeping over France, was powerless to lay it, and every measure of the assembly to restore order only

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\* LAVALLÉE, THIERS, MIGNET, &c.

added to the confusion and the anarchy, and raised such hatred against its members, that their lives were no longer in safety. Again an election, which took place under the most dreadful and the most demoralizing circumstances, was looked to with hope, and the convention was sighed for, as if it were to open a new era for France.

After the taking of Verdun, the Duke of Brunswick, who did not approve of the plan of invasion, instead of pressing forward and marching upon Paris, as might easily have been done, extended his forces along the Meuse, losing by this movement a whole week; Dumouriez, on the other side, immediately upon learning the fall of Longwy, had abandoned for the time his design of invading Belgium, and had hastened to Sedan, where he found the division of the army, which had been under Lafayette, discouraged at the loss of their commander, and highly dissatisfied with his successor. The council of war which was called, advised a retreat beyond the Marne, there, in conjunction with the armies of the North and the East, to await farther reinforcements. But Dumouriez, having examined the country around, conceived a plan of profiting by the stupid delay of the Prussians. By a most able manœuvre, he put himself in possession of the defiles of Argonne, which he called the Thermopylæ of France, and farther took such prompt and energetic measures, that within a few days his troops occupied and guarded all the outlets of these defiles, which opened or closed the passage into the interior of France. He thus effectually prevented the progress of the Prussian army towards the capital, and saved it from the menacing danger; while new bands of volunteers daily joined the army, which was now full of courage and confidence in its leaders.

In the mean while, the Prussians, seeing the fault they had committed, attacked the defiles (10th Sept., 1792,) and were repulsed; but Dumouriez, deceived

by the movements of the enemy, lost the advantages which he had so recently obtained, and saw himself placed in a most perilous position, between twenty-five thousand Austrians, ready to attack him in the flank, while forty thousand Prussians were opposed to his front, and he was encompassed by two rivers, which confined his movements. But ever ready in resources, and as quick in action as the enemy was slow, Dumouriez, nothing daunted, though obliged again to leave the route to the capital open to the enemy, took up his station on the road to Chalons, his right flank being covered by the Aisne, and the left by some ponds; and being protected in the rear by the town of St. Meneshould and a corps under Dillon, and thus facing Paris, he awaited the attack of the Prussians, which took place on the 20th September. The engagement began by the Duke of Brunswick directing three columns against Kellermann, who had arrived with reinforcements on the preceding day, and was posted by the mill of Valmy\*.

The battle which ensued, though of very little importance in itself, produced in France all the effects of a great victory. The whole nation, as well as the army, was inspired with new ardour by this first success. The Prussians, unacquainted with the country, deprived of provisions, and ravaged by sickness, were disheartened and vacillating. The Duke of Brunswick, finding that he could neither advance nor remain where he was, determined to retreat, and this measure was approved of by the King of Prussia, who had already come to a similar determination, in consequence of events which were taking place in Poland. That country had been invaded by the Russians, in order in concert with Austria to overthrow the consti-

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\* Among the officers who took part in this affair, was the young Duke of Chartres, eldest son of the Duke of Orleans, and now King of the French.

tution of 1791. The King of Prussia, fearing to be duped by the other powers, hastened back to ensure to himself a share in the spoils. Longwy and Verdun were in consequence evacuated, and the Prussians repassed the frontiers on the 1st October, 1792; their march was slow, and but feebly impeded, for Dumouriez was now intent on the conquest of Belgium, and had left the care of pursuing them to Kellermann, with whom he had disagreed. It is supposed that he had concluded a secret convention of evacuation with the enemy, which was ratified by the executive, and the commissaries of the National Assembly, who attended the army\*.

In other directions the French arms were as successful. Custine, who commanded the left wing of the army of Alsace, had commenced an offensive war, and on the 21st October took possession of Worms and Spire, and soon after of Mayence, and then directing his movements towards Frankfort, took possession of that city, and continued to advance along the Maine. At the same time hostilities had commenced at the two extreme points of the allies' line of operations, in the Low Countries, and on the Alps. The Austrians, after having defeated the French near Maulde (24th September, 1792), had taken up their position before Lille; instead of regularly besieging the town, they had bombarded it, but without success, for the inhabitants had defended themselves heroically; and upon learning the advance of Dumouriez, the Austrians were obliged to repass the frontiers on the 8th October. On the Alps, Montesquiou had invaded Savoy (23rd September) with twenty thousand men, and at the same time Anselme had entered the county of Nice, and taken possession of several towns, one hundred cannons, an immense quantity of ammunition, and several ships of war.

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\* HARDENBERG'S *Mémoires*.

Europe was stupified on finding that the armies of the revolutionists were as dangerous as their doctrines; and while the people in many cases showed but too great a tendency towards the adoption of the misconceived ideas of liberty disseminated by the French, their monarchs were planning new measures against the nation who was exhibiting so dangerous a precedent.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

First sitting of the National Convention—How composed—The Gironde—The Mountain—The Plain—Animosity of Parties—Royalty abolished—Sufferings of the Royal Family—Their life in the Temple—Proceedings of the Assembly—Accusations of each Party against the other—Debates on the Trial of the King—Calumnies against him—Dissatisfaction against Dumouriez—General Distress—Increasing Animosity of Parties—The King's Trial—Malesherbes' noble conduct—Execution of the King.

THE day after the battle of Valmy, the National Convention met. The Girondins, who, notwithstanding the abhorrence in which they were held by the Jacobins, still possessed great influence in the departments, had been returned in great numbers, since no decree, as on a former occasion, precluded the members of the foregoing assembly from making a part of the new one. They now, in their turn, became the moderators and conservatives, and formed the party of the right, while the members of the Mountain now occupied the former place of the Girondins, on the left, but still retained the name obtained by their former position, and with it all the passions of which they had before given such strong evidence. Robespierre, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, already well known; Fabre d'Eglantine, a comic author who had taken an active part in all the revolutionary scenes; Collet d'Herbois, an actor; David, a painter; and Philip Egalité, formerly Duke of Orleans, were added to the number of the Mountain party, as well as Legendre, the butcher, Parris Sergent, and Billaud Varrennes, infamous for their conduct in the commune. These were the elected of that odious faction who had governed Paris since the 19th of August, which, in adding to its list, the maniac, Marat, before whose bloody doctrines even the executioners of the 3rd of September recoiled, gave but too fearful a promise of the reign of terror which was to ensue, when this

party had annihilated its opponents. Between these two parties of the right and the left, was again placed a third, the Plain, or the Marais, as usual composed of men partaking of the opinions of both, and giving the majority to the one or the other, according to their convictions; but who being vacillating and weak, ended by being entirely overpowered by the most energetic party, and swelling its numbers, became instrumental in sanctioning every excess.

The Gironde and the Mountain stood opposed to each other as two hostile camps. The former consisted of men of some position and substance, many of whom possessed brilliant, if not solid talents, and all of whom had been brought back to sounder and more moderate views, since they had witnessed the scenes of anarchy and bloodshed which had so lately disgraced the capital. But among these brilliant orators, there was not one who had the capacity, even if he had had the ambition, to curb a nation who had broken all bonds, and to seize upon that despotic power, which alone could now put a stop to the prevailing anarchy. Full of confidence, however, in their own power, they believed that they should carry the centre of the assembly with them in all their measures; the executive was in the hands of their party, and the authorities of the departments were devoted to them; by this support, and through these means, they felt sure they should be able to arrest the progress of disorder, and to establish a republic in which the middle classes, to which they belonged, should have all the power. Their adversaries had other views, and made up for their ignorance, by their audacity, their obstinacy; and their maxim, that 'during a revolution there are no crimes.' It is said that their aim was to save the revolution from the dangers which threatened it from without, and to push things so far that they could not possibly return to their former state. However, it is difficult to believe that these men had any decided aim, though it cannot

be doubted that they were anxious to insure impunity to themselves. The intentions they professed of devising laws which, by rescuing the poor from their misery, and divesting the rich of their superfluities, should bring about a real equality, of course secured to them all the sympathies of that blind and suffering multitude which is ever prone to think that changes will bring benefits.

The animosity between the two parties was manifested immediately upon the opening of the convention. Pétion, who, together with many other members of the constituent assembly, belonged to the Gironde party, was nominated president; and Manuel, another Girondin, on the very first day of the session, made a proposal, (which was certainly very extraordinary at the moment,) which drew down upon his party new attacks against that ambition of domineering of which their adversaries had long accused them. ‘Citizens, representatives,’ said Manuel, ‘everything in this assembly should bear a character of dignity and grandeur, in order that it may be imposing in the sight of the whole world; I therefore demand that the president of France be lodged in the Tuileries; that he be preceded there by national guards, and all the insignia of the law; and that citizens rise up in his presence.’ The Mountainists, particularly Tallier and Chabot, declaimed violently against this imitation of royalty, and declared that the representatives of the people should assimilate themselves to the *sans culottes*, who formed the majority of the nation. Tallier added that the president of the convention should rather be found in a fifth story than in a palace, because the former was more frequently the abode of genius and virtue. This proposition was followed by many others, which exhibited the sentiments that prevailed in the assembly, as to the new constitution, and also manifested the jealous suspicions of each other, which reigned among the members. It was declared that absolute equality



should be the basis of the new constitution, that the sovereignty of the people should be decreed, that *hâtréd* should be sworn against royalty, dictatorships, triumvirates, and every individual authority, and that the penalty of death should be affixed to the offence of proposing the establishment of any such authorities. These were followed by the formal declaration of the president, by the unanimous consent of the convention, that royalty was abolished in France. Though this was but the declaration of a fact which had existed ever since the 10th of August, it was received with great applause, and messengers were dispatched to announce the joyful intelligence to the armies, and all the municipalities of France.

In the mean while the unhappy prisoners in the Temple, who sanctified their captivity by the Christian resignation and sincere piety with which they bore it, were still rigorously guarded by the commissioners of the commune, whose brutality towards them has been denounced even by the Jacobins themselves. The municipal officers who guarded them had orders never to lose sight of them, and these orders were in many cases so strictly followed as to give additional torture to their victims. At night, when the members of the royal family had retired to their humble bed-rooms, a bed, wherein slept an officer of the guard, was placed outside of each door, in order to preclude the possibility of escape. At first the prisoners had been allowed the use of pen, ink, and paper, but they were soon deprived of these; and also of all sharp instruments, such as razors, knives, penknives, and scissors, for which search was made, with a revolting and insulting minuteness. By these means the princesses, who had hitherto kept their own and the king's clothes in repair, were debarred even the decency of wearing whole clothes, for they had had no new apparel since they had been removed to the Temple, and they had not previously had time to make any provision; and

the Queen of France was beholden to the wife of the English ambassador for linen! It is supposed that the commune would not have denied the necessaries of life to the royal family, if any request had been made; but the pride which revolted from this condescension is neither unnatural nor blameable. Some historians do indeed mention official accounts of the expenses of the Temple, which prove that the royal kitchen was well supplied; and these documents cannot be doubted, as they always speak with due respect of the royal prisoners, and at the same time bear witness to the sobriety of Louis XVI., whose base detractors had spread the report that he allowed himself too great an indulgence in wine; and, if fabricated by them, these accounts would have borne the same infamous character.

The only attendant who had been allowed to follow the royal family to prison was Cléry, the king's faithful *valet de chambre*, who, with a devotion that does equal honour to his own heart and to the kindness of his royal master and family, sought by redoubled zeal and activity to make them forget that he was their only attendant. In the kitchen, however, there were thirteen domestics employed, but with the exception of one, who sometimes assisted Cléry in waiting at table, none of these were allowed to enter the apartments of the prisoners. Through this one, who had a humane heart, Cléry obtained the only intelligence which reached them of what was passing without, until he had devised the ingenious plan of gaining information, through means of a newsman, who placed himself under the windows of the Temple, and, under pretence of offering his papers for sale, in a loud voice proclaimed their contents.

Louis being now reduced to private life, developed all those amiable qualities which would have sufficed to make him beloved and respected, had his lot been cast in the humbler walks of life; while the more

exalted characters of the queen and the Princess Elizabeth bore equally well the test of adversity. The greater part of the day was occupied with the education of the young prince and princess, who shared their parents' captivity; and the only diversion which broke the monotony of their life, was a short walk in the gardens of the Temple, accompanied by a strong guard, a pleasure which was but too often bought at the expense of bitter humiliations heaped upon them by their unmerciful gaolers, or by the heartless mob. Occasionally, however, they enjoyed the melancholy satisfaction of catching the anxious and sympathising glance of some of their former dependants, who had, alas! nothing else to give, for they were as sorely beset as their royal benefactors.

The royal family were made acquainted with the proceedings in the convention, on the 21st, by the stentorian voice of the municipal officer, proclaiming (outside of their prison windows) the abolition of royalty, and the establishment of the republic. The king and the queen both heard the announcement with unshaken firmness, greatly to the disappointment of their ferocious gaoler\*, Hébert, who had fixed his eyes upon them with a malicious grin, anticipating the delight of reveling in the sight of their misery. The populace assembled without, prompted by the same uncharitable feelings, and mistaking Cléry, who had drawn near the window, for his royal master, overwhelmed him with abuse; and the military who escorted the municipal officer threatened him with their sabres.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, the convention decreed that all the laws which were not abrogated should be considered in full force; that all the administrative, municipal, and judiciary bodies should be re-elected; that the emigrants should be considered banished for life, and should be punished with death in case they

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The members of the commune exercised this function by turns.

re-entered France, or were taken in arms. The assembly then divided into committees of surveillance, of war, of legislation, of finance, of diplomacy, &c., all of which were mostly composed of Girondins. This section of the assembly then demanded from the ministers a report of the state of affairs: and when Roland had unveiled all the atrocities of the massacres of September, and had denounced the anarchy which was now spreading in the departments, several of the Girondins seized this opportunity for attacking the Jacobins, who, they said, were the instigators of these crimes, and were desirous of arriving at supreme power through bloodshed and anarchy. They ended by denouncing Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, as the triumvirate, who were endeavouring to obtain the dictatorship. The Jacobins replied by counter accusations against the Girondins, who, they said, wished to divide the empire, to sacrifice the capital, and render France a federation of small states. 'Therefore,' said Danton, 'they are indignant at the energetic measures which we take for the public good. They are desirous of exercising in the disunited departments that dictatorship which they now accuse us of coveting, and they would destroy the republic by federalism.' Robespierre limited his defence to the usual and oft-repeated enumeration of his services; but Marat, with that shameless audacity that characterized all his proceedings, boldly proclaimed his bloody principles, and made even the Mountainists shudder at the monster, 'dripping with gall and blood,' as Vergniaud had expressed it, whom they had associated with themselves. The Girondins are generally blamed for the imprudence of their attacks upon their adversaries; but to the friend of humanity, who believes that things had then arrived at that point in France, that they were beyond all human control, it is consolatory to see in the very imprudence of these attacks, proofs that there were still human hearts in France, and that the men who, by their

impetuous passions and ignorant zeal, had greatly contributed to bring about the dreadful state of disorder which they now deprecated, had learnt to see whither they had been carried. One great evil did, however, certainly result from their loudly expressed animosity to Robespierre, and that was the giving him greater importance in the eyes of his party and the multitude than he would otherwise have obtained, and which contributed materially to his acquiring the power which he afterwards exercised. In the more important points of government, the Girondins also committed gross errors. Though aiming at directing affairs, they took no measures to secure power to themselves; all their propositions were generally rejected, and not only were they unable to put into execution their favourite idea of having a departmental guard of three thousand men to ensure the independence of the convention; but the proposal of such a measure furnished their adversaries with new weapons against them; their resolution was met by the Mountain with another; the declaration of the *unity and indivisibility of the republic*, which was carried, though it contained implied accusations against their adversaries, whom, as we have already seen, they suspected, or pretended to suspect, of wishing to divide the empire. At length an apparent truce suspended the wearisome quarrels between the two parties, which only served to prove, that in that France, which wished to be considered as glowing with the enthusiasm of liberty, none could agree upon what liberty was, while all felt that fear of despotism which anarchy must ever bring in its wake. The attention of the assembly was for a moment turned to the new constitution which was again to be given to France; but the Mountainist party, finding that the constitutional committee was to be directed by their adversaries, in order to make a diversion in their own favour, proposed the trial of the king, which they knew would be the powerful means of again working up the

passions of the people, and of preventing the establishment of any other kind of government than that of the mob, which they directed. They also knew that the Girondins would be averse to the condemnation of the king; and they looked with double delight to the trial, as it would not alone satisfy their hatred against royalty, but would also be a new means of rendering their enemies unpopular, and of hastening their downfall. These men were never mistaken, when they calculated upon the passions they knew so well how to excite.

The Jacobin club, which had long re-echoed to invectives against the king, and daily spread new calumnies against his character, had prepared the public mind for his condemnation, by causing it to be considered as necessary for liberty. The affiliated clubs in the departments had also done their best, and the result was that deputations presented themselves at the bar of the convention, demanding vengeance on Louis *Capet*; the dignity of these new republicans would not allow them to bestow any other title on their former monarch. Their demands were acceded to, and the debates on the king's trial commenced at a most propitious moment for those who hoped for a bloody issue. The general animosity against the king was at that time greatly increased by the discovery of a secret closet in the palace of the Tuileries, wherein the king had deposited all the papers relative to the correspondence which had passed between him and the emigrants, the foreign powers, Mirabeau, and the different members of the constituent assembly who had entered into negotiations with the court. The perverted imagination of the mob was now again set to work, to invent new calumnies against the unhappy monarch, and the locksmith who had contrived the closet for the king, and who was under the greatest personal obligations to him for benefits received, was base enough to pander to the public appetite, and to accuse the king of having

attempted to poison him, in order to ensure his secrecy. He was of course believed; and the vengeance taken upon the bust of Mirabeau, which had been placed in the hall of the Jacobins, and was now smashed to pieces, was ominous of the fate that awaited the living Louis.

For some time the assembly entertained doubts whether the prince, being once dethroned, could be further prosecuted, as there was no tribunal that could pronounce judgment upon him, and no kind of punishment that could be inflicted; unfortunately, however, the factions were not only strong enough to break the law, but they had also the power to give to their infractions of it an appearance of legality; accordingly, by dint of false interpretations, the committee of legislation, charged with a report upon the subject, soon pronounced that Louis XVI. could be tried, and that by the convention itself.

The discussions commenced on the 13th November. In vain did the moderate party maintain the inviolability guaranteed to the king by the constitution, and though admitting that he was guilty, seek to prove by the laws of humanity as well as by the laws of the state, that he ought not and could not be condemned to death, and that the convention had no right to erect itself into a tribunal. The Mountainists, on their side, denied the inviolability, but nevertheless rejected the trial, though upon very different grounds. 'Citizens,' said St. Just, 'I undertake to prove that the opinion of Morisson, who believes in the inviolability of the king, and that of the committee, who require him to be judged as a citizen, are equally wrong. I maintain that the king should be judged as an enemy; that our business is not so much to try him, as to oppose him: that considered as nothing in the contract which unites Frenchmen, the forms of procedure are not in the civil law, but in the law of nations; that delays and consideration are in this case a real imprudence; and

that, after the fault of retarding the movement for giving new laws, the most fatal would be that which should lead us to temporize with the king.' Then referring the whole question to considerations of enmity and policy, he added: 'The same men who are about to judge Louis, have a republic to form; those who attach any importance to the just chastisement of a king, will never found a republic. . . . Citizens, if the Roman people, after six hundred years of virtuous hatred to kings; if Great Britain, after the death of Cromwell, saw kings revive, notwithstanding the energy of its people, what ought not to be feared among us by all good citizens and friends of liberty, at seeing the axe tremble in your hands, and a people forced, in the very first day of its freedom, to respect the remembrance of its chains!'

To all the sophisms and the passions of the Mountainists, the Girondins in vain opposed the more humane feelings that animated them: in these discussions, as in all their movements, they were weak and vacillating, while their opponents were impetuous and determined; and the Plain having been subdued by the most energetic party, it was resolved that the king should be brought before the convention to stand his trial.

While the fanatical republicans were preparing to take the life of an innocent and helpless man, whose chief crime in their eyes was his having been born to command those who now considered it degradation to submit to any kind of authority; the greatest disorders were introduced in every branch of administration by these lovers of anarchy, masked under the name of liberty, and were productive of burthens and sufferings, which were quite equal to any under which the people had ever bent during the reign of the most despotic and most unscrupulous of their monarchs.

Dumouriez, who had re-assumed his plan of conquering Belgium, had opened the campaign with the



brilliant victory of Jemappes. The hostilities were, however, directed solely against the Austrians, whose yoke had become hateful to the Belgians, and the French general presented himself to this people as a liberator, not as a conqueror, merely suggesting the same revolutionary measures to them, as had been taken by the French. But, in order to be consistent, it was necessary for him to avoid violently levying contributions in the invaded land, and his army was in a state of the utmost destitution, while the Belgians were nowise inclined to barter their goods for worthless *assignats*. Dumouriez, to help himself out of this difficulty, conceived the plan of procuring a loan from the Belgian clergy, to be guaranteed by France, and then himself to provide all the necessaries for the army. He further calculated, that as Belgium would have to pay France an indemnity for undertaking its *liberation*, this indemnity might be exchanged against the debt incurred, and that, by means of the purchases he had to make, the circulation of French assignats would be gradually introduced. The Belgian clergy, seeing a guarantee for its own security in this desire of the French general of entering into negotiations for a loan, acceded to his wish, and he was enabled to provide for some of the most pressing wants of his troops. But his rapid success did not reconcile the Jacobins to his arbitrary measures and presumptuous tone, and they were further exasperated against him, because he did not seem inclined to force Jacobinism upon the Belgians, who, though desirous of throwing off the yoke of the foreigners, were far from being inspired by the fanatic ideas of the French. These events, together with others in the interior, brought about a total revolution in the administrative departments, which had hitherto remained untouched, because they did not hold out so great temptations to the ambitious. Seeing how much they would have it in their power to control the armies through the war

office, this office was now invaded by the Jacobins, and the minister of war (Pache), a weak and pliant man, who had succeeded Servan, was held in perfect subjection by them. A committee of purchasers (*comité d'achats*) was nominated to provide for the armies, to avoid the frauds practised by the contractors; and Dumouriez was ordered to desist for the future from entering into any negotiations for provisioning his army. The General was indignant, and protested loudly against the *comité d'achats*, which he maintained was an absurdity, and declared that the army would perish for want, ere the said committee could find means to export and transport the necessary provisions; and he offered his resignation, in case his complaints were not attended to. All parties in France thundered against the General, who was suspected of dangerous ambition, and was denominated Cæsar Dumouriez; while he continued to act as before, and with the troops, who were by this means saved from starvation, occupied almost the whole of Belgium. He had, however, a thousand difficulties to contend with; the enthusiasm which had made his compatriots flock to his banners, while the enemy was threatening their country, began now to abate, and desertions from the army became very frequent.

In the mean time, the people who had remained at home were not better off than the army; here also starvation and destitution of every kind was pressing upon the multitude. The harvest had been retarded for want of hands, as well as the thrashing out of the corn; also the insecurity of the times, the fear of being pillaged on the way, and the thousand vexations which awaited them at the markets, deterred the farmers from bringing their provisions thither; besides, they were unwilling to part with their goods for bad assignats. The people, instead of being taught a lesson by the difficulties their own disorders occasioned, only broke out into new violence against the farmers, and

made them still more reluctant to appear in the markets; and the scarcity became worse in consequence. To increase the evil, everybody rendered provident by the danger of starvation, which they foresaw, public authorities, as well as private individuals, hastened to lay in stores for a future day. The commune of Paris added to the existing difficulties by buying up corn in the neighbouring departments, and selling it under price in the capital, in order to obtain popularity; from which resulted, that the merchants withdrew from the market, as they could not compete with these prices, and the country people, attracted by the cheapness of provisions, flocked to town, and absorbed a great part of what had been provided for the subsistence of the capital.

All parties were of course greatly moved by this state of things, and strongly evinced their different characters by the measures proposed for obviating the difficulties. The Jacobins, the men who had offered up torrents of blood—to which they were now going to add that of a monarch—on the altar of what they called liberty, immediately proposed measures of extreme violence and coercion. They would have the farmers forced to carry their grain to market, to sell it at a price fixed by the communes, which should also be watchful that the corn did not again leave the place, and was not accumulated in the granaries of what they called the monopolists (*accapareurs*). They were desirous of establishing a system of commerce based upon the fear of tortures and death. The more moderate party, on the contrary, was anxious to put a stop to that anarchy which was the first cause of the stagnation of commerce and of the existing scarcity, and by letting things take their natural course, they were sure all would soon be again righted. But while these subjects were being discussed in the convention, and were of course giving the parties new occasion for mutual attacks and accusations, the people in the pro-

vinces, and particularly those of the department of the Eure and Loire, revolted and accused the convention of being the cause of all their sufferings, because it would not put a fixed price upon corn; and at the same time charged it with wishing to destroy religion. The latter complaint was occasioned by a measure which had been proposed by Cambonne, to suppress all the expenses for religious purposes, in order to provide for the wants of the army, and to make all those 'who wished to hear mass, pay for it.'

As the difficulties increased, so increased the mutual hatred of the two parties in the convention. On the 30th, after a most stormy debate, wherein Marat, according to his usual fashion, had denounced conspiracies and intrigues, which most frequently existed in his own imagination alone, Robespierre mounted the tribune, and proposed, as the best means of at once putting down all conspiracies, 'to condemn to-morrow the tyrant of the French to the punishment he has deserved by his crimes.' The Girondins opposed, and after many long and sterile debates they at last prevailed, as we have seen, in obtaining a trial for the king, though they must have felt that the Mountainists, who were backed by the immense multitude without, which participated in all their passions, were pre-determined upon the result of the trial.

On the 11th of January, 1793, Louis XVI. was summoned before the convention. Fortunately Cléry had previously obtained information of the king's intended trial, and separation from his family during that period. Fearing the effect that it might produce upon the king, he first acquainted the Princess Elizabeth with it, and upon her devolved the painful task of communicating the melancholy intelligence to her unhappy brother. The king heard it with perfect resignation, and prepared to bear everything that should meet him, with the firmness of a Christian. The rolling of drums, the march of troops, the assembling of all the admi-

nistrative bodies, and the placing of double guards before every public place of importance, announced to the capital, that for the first time, it was to see the monarch appear before the people, to answer for the crimes it imputed to him. The royal family were at breakfast when the officers appeared to conduct the king to the convention, and the presence of these strange witnesses, as well as the necessity of appearing ignorant of what was going on, prevented the unhappy family from giving vent to their feelings, at this most trying moment of their lives. The king went in a carriage accompanied by the mayor, and surrounded by an immense guard; but this was needless, the number of those who panted for the unhappy monarch's blood, was too great in comparison to those who felt for his fate, to admit of any attempt to save him. He entered the assembly with a firm and manly bearing, and standing before the bar, looked round him with an air of resolution. In a faltering tone, the president addressed to him the following words: 'Louis, the French nation accuses you: you are now about to hear the reading of the charges. Louis, sit down.' The king complied, and then in a firm and calm, and sometimes in a touching manner, replied to the accusations brought against him. Some of the facts he denied, for others he made his ministers responsible; but when at last the outrageous falsehood was uttered, that he had shed the blood of the people on the 10th of August, even his mild spirit was roused, and with the greatest indignation he exclaimed: 'No, sir, no, it was not I that did that! . . .' But among the facts that Louis denied, were also some, the truth of which was incontestibly proved, such as the existence of the iron closet, and here again we have to deplore that weakness of mind that neutralized the virtues of this otherwise good man.

After the interrogatory was ended, the king demanded to have a copy of the bill of accusation, and counsel to aid him in his defence. He was then recon-

ducted to the Temple, and his first question on arriving, was for his family. He then received the stunning intelligence that he was indeed to be separated from them during the time of his trial. But the unhappy monarch, who had had so many proofs of the hard-heartedness of those who, having been his accusers, were now to be his judges, could not believe that they were so lost to all feeling, as to persist in the resolution, of separating a dying father and husband from those he was to leave in a state of misery to which few on earth have been reduced; and he continued to implore, until at length his prayer was granted. On the 15th he was again allowed to see his family.

After Louis had left the assembly, violent discussions ensued, as to whether he was to be allowed counsel or not. The more just opinion this time prevailed; and Target, whom the king had chosen, together with Tronchet, for his defender, having declined the duty, the venerable Malesherbes, the friend of Turgot, offered to take his place. 'I have been twice called, (wrote this virtuous man, whose name shines like a bright star, in the dark history of those fearful times), to be counsel to him who was once my master, at a time when these functions were ambitiously sought by every one; I owe him the same service now, when they are by many considered dangerous.' The poor abandoned king was deeply touched on hearing of this proof of devotion, and when Malesherbes was introduced to him, he threw himself in his arms, saying: 'The sacrifice you make for me is so much the more generous, as you expose your own life without a chance of saving mine.' Though all must have been of the same opinion, Malesherbes and Tronchet, having associated with themselves Desèze, seriously occupied themselves with the king's defence, without, however, inspiring the devoted victim with any false hopes. 'They will take my life, of that I am sure,' said Louis, 'but no matter; let us busy ourselves with our process, as if I were sure

of gaining it. Indeed I *shall* gain it; for the memory I leave behind will be spotless.'

On the 26th the defence was completed, and Louis again appeared before the convention, with the same calmness and resignation as before. Desèze pronounced the able and eloquent defence, concluding with the words: 'Listen first to what Fame will say to History. Louis, who ascended the throne at the age of twenty, carried with him there an example of morals, of justice, and of economy: he had no weaknesses, no corrupting passions, and he was the constant friend of the people. The people desired that a disastrous impost should be abolished, and Louis abolished it; the people asked for the abolition of servitudes, and Louis destroyed them; they demanded reforms, he consented to them; they wished to change the laws by which they were governed, he agreed to their demands; the people required that some millions of people should recover their rights, and these he rendered to them; the people asked for liberty, and he gave it to them. No one can dispute that Louis had the glory of preventing the demands of his people by making these sacrifices, and he it is whom it has been proposed to . . . . Citizens, I cannot go on; I pause before History: remember that History will judge your judgment, and that hers will be that of ages to come.' The passions of the men he appealed to, however, were too strong to allow of their looking any farther than to the gratification of the moment, and though fame was the only eternity they hoped for, it was indifferent to them at that moment.

No sooner had Louis left the convention, than a scene of riot and disorder took place, which surpassed everything that had as yet been seen even in that most disorderly assembly. Lanjuinais, a Girondin, gave the signal, by demanding the rescission of the procedure. 'You cannot,' said he to the assembly, 'be at once accusers, judges, and jury, particularly as you have all openly declared your opinions, and some of you with

most scandalous ferocity.' These words produced the greatest tumult, which was very nearly ending in a regular outbreak. Louvet and Barbaroux several times descended to the bar, with about a hundred more Girondins, and tried to scale the seats of the Mountainists. From all sides were heard the terms scoundrels, robbers, traitors, conspirators, which these worthy patriots applied to each other. Marat's disgusting person, and just as disgusting eloquence, was the most revolting feature in this shameful conflict, in which the people in the galleries also took a part, whenever the members of the Mountain pointed out to them an adversary to attack. At last some kind of order was restored, and it was decreed that the king's process should be continued, to the exclusion of all other business. The Mountain, irritated at this farther delay, recommenced its demands for the immediate execution of the king, which it represented as being necessary for the salvation of the people, and as the only means of breaking entirely with the past. So lost to shame was this faction, that one of its members, Merlin de Thionville, dared to say—'If I had followed my first thought on the 10th August, I would have spared you the trouble of judging the tyrant.' The unhappy king's name was never mentioned without being accompanied by terms of abuse, which became even ridiculous in their exaggeration; and to all this was added base flatteries to the mob, and declamatory allusions to characters of antiquity, who would have blushed at this profanation of their names. As the discussion continued, the personal feelings against the king seemed less to prevail, and his death was then merely considered in its influence on the Revolution. The Girondins were alarmed at the turn that matters were taking. They had wished to save the king's life, because they regarded his death as a useless cruelty, which would cover the Revolution with opprobrium, and would be looked upon as a challenge offered to



the whole of Europe; but seeing that they would be lost if they absolved him, and being unwilling to contribute to the triumph of their enemies, by condemning him, they, in their profound incapacity, proposed a measure which was exactly calculated to bring about that which they feared. They demanded that appeal should be made to the people on the judgment of the king. This proposal, which furnished their adversaries with the most plausible reason for accusing them of a desire of plunging France into a civil war, has, on the other side, given rise to suspicions as to the sincerity of their desire to save the king; and they have been accused of having, on the contrary, wished by these means to implicate the whole people in his death, so as to render it impossible for them to draw back. The onward career of the Revolution was, however, clearly the wish of the Jacobins, and it seems, therefore, unjust to attribute such traitorous designs to men, who appear rather to have sinned from ignorance and incapacity than from evil intentions.

The discussion lasted twelve days, and was but a continuation of the struggle between the two parties, during which they passed decrees, not with a view to public interest, but with a desire to curb each other. Thus the Girondins proposed and carried a measure, determining that whoever should attempt or propose to re-establish royalty should be punished with death; and the Mountainists, in their turn, obtained a decree, that whoever should attempt or propose to dis-sever the unity of the republic should be similarly punished. The Girondins then obtained a decree, ordering the banishment of the Orleans family, suspected of designs upon the throne; and the Mountainists succeeded in having the execution of the decree deferred until judgment should be pronounced upon the king. During this time Paris was in a state of

extreme agitation. The most violent among the Jacobins invaded the sections, and drove the honest and peaceful men from every council; the National Guard was dispirited, and remained passive; the great council of the commune, though it had been renewed since the horrid massacres of September, was nevertheless still composed of a vile set, under the direction of Hébert and Chaumette; and to all the other causes of agitation was added the misery occasioned by the scarcity to which allusion has already been made.

At length it was finally determined in the convention, that three questions were to be put relative to the king's trial, and that every member should in his turn ascend the tribune, to pronounce his vote, which was to be written and signed. The questions were, Is Louis guilty of conspiracy against the nation, and of assaults upon the general safety of the state? Shall the judgment be submitted to the sanction of the people? What shall be the punishment?

The Mountainists voted with evident joy and alacrity; they had no scruples on the subject: to imbrue their hands in blood had become to them an easy and familiar task. The Girondins had still a conscience, but it did not speak loud enough to save them from guilt. The votes being given, the president declared, *in the name of the convention, that the punishment it awards Louis Capet is death.*

The sentence was immediately communicated to the unhappy king, who wrote in reply to the assembly, 'I owe it to my honour, I owe it to my family, not to submit to a judgment which accuses me of a crime, that I have never committed. I declare in consequence that I appeal to the people against the judgment of its representatives.' On the motion of Robespierre, this appeal was rejected, and on the morrow it was decreed that the ministers should have the judgment executed within four-and-twenty hours, and that the commune should allow the king free communica-

tion with his family, and free choice of an ecclesiastic to attend him.

The Christian fortitude which Louis had shown throughout his sufferings, did not forsake him in his last trial. The Abbé Edgworth, the worthy ecclesiastic whom he chose to attend him in his last moments, describes as follows his interview with the king:—‘The moment I saw the king, a prince once so elevated by fortune, and now so fallen, I was no longer master of myself; tears rolled down my cheeks, and I sank at his feet, unable to express myself in any other language than that of my affliction. The sight of me thus prostrate before him affected him more, far more, than the decree of the convention, the sentence of death which had just been read to him. Tears flowed in like manner down the countenance of the king. Recovering himself at length,—“Pardon,” he cried, “pardon this weakness, if weakness it must be called, whatever be the occasion; but I have lived so long in the midst of my enemies, that the sight of a faithful subject like you, speaks so differently to my heart, that in spite of myself it quite unmans me.”’

After this, the king had to meet and to take the last farewell of his family. The agony of this scene, I pass over in silence. It was such that every feeling heart will pray to God to be spared the inflicting of, even in the justest cause, and to make us shudder at the thought of those who inflicted it wantonly and unjustly. What were the feelings of Louis with regard to these unhappy men, we learn from his will, which contains these words: ‘I beg all those whom I have offended through inadvertency, (for I do not recollect having ever intentionally offended any one,) and also all those to whom I may have given a bad example, to forgive me for the evil which such conduct may have produced. I beseech all those who are endowed with charity, to join their prayers with mine, to obtain of God the pardon of my iniquities. I pardon with all my heart

those who have become my enemies without cause, and I pray to God to pardon them; as also those who, from mistaken zeal, have done me the greatest injuries.'

What were the faults of the king, compared to this virtue in the man!

On the morning of the 21st of January, 1793, Louis was conducted slowly through a whole army, to the *Place de la Révolution*, where a scaffold was erected near the ruins of the statue of Louis XV. Not one word of sympathy was heard along his passage, but we will hope, for the sake of humanity, that many a silent tear was dropped, that many a silent prayer was offered up for him, and those he left behind him, though terror prevented it rising from the heart to the lips. On mounting the scaffold, the king attempted to address the multitude, but Santerre, who commanded the troops, gave the signal for the rolling of the drums to drown his voice, and in a few moments the most innocent of monarchs fell the victim of a revolution which his guilty ancestors had bequeathed to him.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

General Hostility of Foreign Powers—Active Measures for raising Troops—Plans of Dumouriez—Continued and violent Disagreements in the Assembly—Defection of Dumouriez—Growing Weakness of the Girondin Party—Disturbances throughout the Provinces—Civil War in La Vendée—The Country assailed on all sides by Foreign Powers—Mutual Hatred and Distrust of the Parties in the Convention—Fall of the Girondins—Excitement in various Provinces—Disastrous state of Affairs—Sufferings of the People—Assignats—Oppressive and Illegal Measures of the Government—Tyrannical Interference.

THE French perfectly well understood the position in which they had placed themselves with regard to the rest of Europe, by decreeing the king's death, but the greater number accepted it with joy. 'We can no more recoil,' said Marat; 'we must now either conquer or die!' and the army wrote to the assembly: 'We thank you for having made it necessary for us to be victorious!' According to the Mountainists, the head of the last of the Capets, was the gauntlet thrown to the monarchies of Europe, and was indeed the signal for all the powers of Europe, who had hitherto stood aloof, in anxious suspense, to forget all other enmities and interests, and to turn their arms against that nation who, not content with overthrowing the whole social edifice in their own country, called upon all the nations of the earth to do the same, and offered their assistance in the work of destruction. French historians consider the hostile steps of the European powers, and particularly of England, unjust against the French Revolution; and so they would have been, had the revolutionists been content without seeking allies among their subjects, for no nation has a right to interfere, in a hostile way, in the domestic broils of its neighbour. But, from the very commencement of the Revolution, the French had used their opinions as aggressive weapons, and therefore Europe was now in arms against

them. The only powers that remained neutral were Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Venice, and Turkey.

France was not alarmed by the enemies she had provoked; she looked to her resources: 'three millions of men, eight millions of property, and all the nations of Europe to revolutionize,' and she felt secure. The convention for a moment forgot all dissensions, in its anxiety to take measures of safety for the country; the first of which was to replace the incompetent Pache by Beurnonville, as minister of war. Cambon, *rapporteur* of the finance committee, having shown that they could not again have recourse to contributions or loans, it was decreed that more assignats should be issued. The assignats already in circulation amounted to the sum of two thousand three hundred and eighty-seven millions, (95,480,000*l.*); but the confiscated property of the emigrants was valued at seven thousand seven hundred and fifty; and the assembly first decreed an issue of eight hundred millions of assignats, and three months later of one thousand two hundred millions more; and further, when the *rapporteur* of the military committee had stated that the army, reduced to two hundred and sixty thousand men, was far from efficient to guard all the quarters whence attacks might be expected, it was decreed that all the national guards were in permanent requisition, and that three hundred thousand more should immediately be levied. They were, however, obliged to open the campaign with only two hundred and seventy thousand men. Fifty thousand were drawn together on the coasts, or near the Pyrenees; forty thousand were stationed on the Alps, eighty thousand on the Rhine, and twenty thousand on the Moselle, besides eighty thousand on the Rôer and in Belgium. This latter army was, as we have seen, in a state of the utmost destitution, and Dumouriez had, therefore, not ventured to attempt to throw back the enemy beyond the Rhine; besides, he had been more intent upon the internal disturbances in his own country

than upon his military operations. In consequence of the decree of the 15th December, a host of Jacobins had invaded Belgium, under the name of commissaries of the executive government, and had brought with them the anarchy of France, with all its engines, such as clubs, assignats, imprisonments, and sequestration of the property of nobles and clergy. The Belgians cursed their liberators; and their indignation was at its height, when they saw even their churches profaned and dispoiled. Irritated at all these excesses, Dumouriez repaired to Paris to denounce those who were committing them, but was received by the calumnies of the clubs, which accused him of having allowed the Austrians to escape, as he had let the Prussians withdraw, and he departed again, determined to perform some striking deed which should give him the right and the power to put down the odious sway of the Jacobins. But the movements he made in Holland to that effect, were attended with very little success, and he ended by being defeated at Aix-la-Chapelle, and at Neerwinden. Seeing that the loss of Belgium would be the inevitable result of this defeat, and that he would in consequence be exposed to the fury of his enemies, he resumed the project which he had entertained ever since the commencement of the campaign, and to which he might have attached some hope, had he been a conquering, instead of a defeated general, but which, under the latter circumstances, led to his ruin, as well as to that of the Girondins, who were suspected of being his accomplices. Dumouriez' plan was no less than to bring France back to the constitution of '91, to reconcile her with the powers of Europe, by giving her a legal government, and to place upon the throne the Duke of Chartres, the son of Philip Egalité. For this purpose he recalled his troops from Holland, and made his retreat, slowly followed by the Austrians, with whom he had made a secret engagement to evacuate Belgium. He abandoned Brussels, and evacuated

Antwerp and Namur, and arrived on the French frontiers, where he cantoned his troops in the camps of Maulde and Bruille.

In the mean while the struggles of the Girondins and the Mountainists, which the king's death had but rendered more fierce, went on. 'One would have supposed them to be two distinct assemblies, each laying every day before the republic a bill of accusation against the other. They considered the ruin of their enemies the most sacred duty; every day massacres were announced for the ensuing day, and the threats did not always proceed from the Jacobins: they were also heard against them\*.' The Mountainists maintained that the Girondins were going to separate themselves from France, to join England, deliver up Savoy to the Piedmontese, and to open the South of France to the Spaniards, &c. &c. The Girondins, on the other side, said, 'When the left side has murdered the right side, the Duke of York will come and take possession of the throne, and Orleans, who has promised it to him, will assassinate him; Orleans will then be assassinated by Marat, Danton, and Robespierre; and the triumvirs will divide among themselves France covered with blood and ashes, until the cleverest of the three (and that will be Danton) assassinates the other two, and reigns alone†.' Such were the men of renovated, republican France; such were the leaders who, the unhappy people thought, had taken them out of bondage, and whose worthlessness, after having made France the theatre of scenes the atrocity of which it had never witnessed in the days of the most rigid despotism, was to lead them back to despotism, only under a new form. The indefatigable bravery of the French, in combating their external foes, does indeed prove that there was a true love of their country at the bottom of their hearts, and on this love what noble sen-

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\* *Mém. de GARAT, Histoire Parlem.*

+ *Hist. Parlem.*



timents may not be engrafted! The soldiers employed on the frontiers may be said to be the only Frenchmen of those days whose patriotism remained pure.

The Girondins were every day losing ground: their feeble efforts for order and liberty could not counterbalance, far less prevent, the energetic measures of the Mountainists for anarchy and oppression.

On receipt of the news of the defeat of Aix-la-Chapelle, the capital, fermented by the Jacobins, was in a state of agitation almost equal to that which preceded the massacres of September, and again measures of an extra legal nature were proposed, to counteract the enemies in the interior, who served as a pretext for every new act of violence. The Girondins this time carried the victory over their adversaries, by obtaining the passing of a decree that placed the extraordinary tribunal\* which was to be erected for judging conspirators, under the control of the convention, but so great was the tumult which the Mountainists raised in consequence thereof, that a band of Jacobins marched against the assembly, demanding the heads of the Girondins. Of the latter, some hid themselves, others armed, determined that if they fell, some of the Mountainists should die with them. But a battalion of a regiment of the line, being fortunately at this critical time in Paris, Beurnonville, minister of war, was able to disperse the rioters.

A few days after, however, when news arrived of the defeat at Neerwinden, which was accompanied by a letter from Dumouriez, full of threats against the convention, all resistance of the Girondins, who were accused of being leagued with him, was in vain; and the Mountain decreed that all those who took part in counter-revolutionary movements should be outlawed; that all ecclesiastics on whom banishment had been pronounced, and who should still be found in France,

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\* This tribunal was composed of a jury, of five judges, of a public accuser, and of two assistants, all appointed by the convention.

should be put to death; that domiciliary visits should be made with a view to disarming the suspected; that the names of the inhabitants of every house should be written on their doors, &c. &c. They further demanded that the executive power should be taken from the ministers to be vested in the convention, and that a committee of public safety (*salut public*) should be appointed, and be invested with the power of exercising a kind of dictatorship. Finally, on learning that Dumouriez had avowed his counter-revolutionary intentions, he was summoned to the bar of the convention, and the minister of war and four deputies were sent to intimate to him this order.

When they arrived, Dumouriez' dispositions were already taken: he had entered into engagements with the Austrians, who were to remain on the frontier, while he marched against Paris, 'to re-establish the constitution of '91, and save the sound and oppressed part of the convention.' Instead, therefore, of obeying the summons of the commissaries, he arrested them, and gave them into the custody of the Austrians. Here, however, the success of Dumouriez ended, for he was first defeated by a corps of volunteers, then abandoned by his own troops, and obliged to fly the country. The convention put a price upon his head, and named Dampierre his successor as commander in Belgium.

After the defection of Dumouriez, the Jacobins raised their voices louder than ever against the Girondins and Philip of Orleans. The Girondins retaliated upon the Mountainists, and particularly upon Danton, who had recently been in Belgium, and had enriched himself with the spoils of that country. Danton, highly exasperated, declared war of extermination against them. The convention decreed that its members might, in case of very grave suspicions, be summoned before the revolutionary tribunal; that Philip of Orleans and his family should be arrested, and transferred to Marseilles; that the extra-

ordinary tribunal should be authorized to pass sentence upon crimes of conspiracy on the simple denunciation of the public accuser; that three members of the convention should be in constant attendance on each division of the army, and be invested with unlimited power to watch over the conduct of the generals, to concert operations, to levy national guards, to take all pressing measures for the subsistence of the troops, to call upon all functionaries to lend their assistance, &c. &c. Finally, the committee of public safety was established. It was composed of nine members, who were to be re-elected every month, and whose deliberations were to be secret; they were to watch over, to accelerate, or to suspend, the action of the executive power, according to the exigencies of the time, and were in urgent cases to take measures for external as well as internal defence, and were to correspond with the commissaries of the convention. The Girondins were excluded from this committee, as well as from all other administrative bodies, and were now entirely restricted to the convention, where they still continued to exercise some influence by their superior talents and eloquence. Means were not spared, however, to drive them from this their last intrenchment. Marat, supported by Robespierre, tried to get up a petition against them, but was denounced by them, and made to appear before the revolutionary tribunal, by which, however, this monster was acquitted, in terms of respect; while, on the other hand, petitions from the sections poured in to the convention, demanding the expulsion of twenty-two members of the Gironde, and the popular fury, which was soon to annihilate them, grew stronger every day.

The same party dissensions which reigned in the convention were distracting the whole of France. The eastern and north-eastern departments being most immediately threatened by foreign invasion, were the most excited, and in consequence participated in the

fierce passions of the Mountainist faction. The southern departments adhered to the Girondins; in the south-eastern departments the higher classes of society, and the departmental authorities, though affecting to be Girondins, were in reality royalists, and offered the most energetic resistance to the Mountainists, who, being there in considerable minority, sought to make up in violence for their want of numbers. The city of Lyons, which was considered the rival of Paris, and whose industry had been completely destroyed by the Revolution, was the centre of opinion for the south-eastern departments, and the principal theatre of the struggles between the pretended Girondins and the Jacobins. The latter, headed by a man named Chalier, who was denominated the Marat of the south, occupied all the municipal posts; they had levied a revolutionary army, imposed a tax of thirty millions on the rich inhabitants; and had imprisoned fifteen hundred persons, whom they threatened to *Septemberize*\*. But the other party struggled manfully against the despotism of the municipality, and bloody frays frequently broke out. On all sides the riots, which, since the commencement of the Revolution had in almost unbroken succession disturbed the whole of France, now threatened to take the more serious character of civil war.

The south-west was sincerely Girondist in feelings and opinion, and the city of Bordeaux, glorying in its representatives, continued to lend them its powerful aid. In the north-west, opinions inclined more towards the constitution of '91; but in the west—that is, in Bretagne, Poitou, and Anjou†—the royalist banners had been openly unfurled, with the fixed determination of re-establishing the throne, the nobles, and the clergy. The feelings that pervaded this part of

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\* So little remorse was felt for the horrid massacres of the prisons, that this had now become a common term among the French.

† La Vendée is the name commonly given to this part of France.

France prove that the system which the Revolution had destroyed was not necessarily one of oppression\*, and that, wherever men are good, and fulfil their duties to their fellow-men, no system is sufficient to reduce them to misery. The peasantry of La Vendée had always found in their *seigneurs* benevolent protectors and sympathising friends, who participated in their sorrows as in their joys, and who, though never losing their own dignity, treated their subordinates with the respect due to them as men; and they were, therefore, little inclined to join those who had declared 'war to the palaces, and peace to the cottages.' In their minds the happiness of the one was intimately connected with that of the other; and when they beheld the revolutionists persecuting even the priests, whom they revered as the servants of God, and who, in their part of the country, though ignorant and poor, had always shown themselves worthy of their mission, they soon learned to look upon the persecutors of their pastors as enemies, and partial insurrections had frequently taken place†. The Vendéans ill-treated the constitutional priests, and went into the woods to hear mass from their own refractory clergy, whom they kept in concealment. They placed themselves in open hostility to the inhabitants of the towns, who had embraced the revolutionary doctrines, but it was not until the convention ordered a conscription of three hundred thousand men, a measure which would have forced the young Vendéans to fight for a cause which they abhorred, that the insurrection broke out simultaneously through all La Vendée. It was on the 10th

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\* When I say the system, I do not mean the *abuses*, which for ages had oppressed the people. In La Vendée the same system existed; but men were virtuous, and the consequence was happiness and contentment in all ranks, and mutual good-will between the different classes.

† On one of these occasions, a peasant resisted the *gensdarmes* with a pitchfork; he had received two-and-twenty sabre strokes, when they cried to him, 'Rends-toi!' 'Rendez moi mon Dieu' (give me back my God), said the peasant, and died as the words were uttered.

of March, the day appointed for drawing the conscription at St. Florent. The peasants disarmed the *gens-d'armes*, and chose as their commander a carter named Cathelineau, who was looked up to as a saint by the whole parish to which he belonged. Cathelineau's troop was afterwards joined by another under the command of Stofflet, a gamekeeper, and they began their campaign by attacking and reducing two towns, guarded by a pretty considerable force. In the commencement of April, the whole country comprised between the ocean and the Loire, the Thoué, and the route from Thouars to Sables-d'Olonne, was in open insurrection; one hundred thousand peasants had taken to arms, and had forced their seigneurs to place themselves at their head. Those among the leaders who distinguished themselves the most, were, besides the two already mentioned, Charette, formerly an officer in the navy; d'Elbée, Lescure, Bonchamp, and Larochejacquelein, a young nobleman of most heroic valour. The Vendéans were divided into three distinct corps, which were directed by a superior council, charged with organizing and accelerating the insurrection. The peasants marched in separate divisions, according to their parishes, carrying with them provisions for a few days. After each expedition they returned again to their homes. Unacquainted with the usual military exercises, they adopted tactics perfectly adapted to the nature of their country, and peculiarly well suited to men, who, though no soldiers, were all excellent marksmen. At the approach of the enemy, they dispersed in small groups, availing themselves of the natural features of the country. From their protected positions they first poured their never-failing shot upon the inexperienced national guards, who were sent against them, and then with loud shouts fell upon and routed their assailants.

The executive council at Paris had immediately, on hearing of the insurrection (13th April, 1793), ordered

that an army should be raised; but a few detachments of gendarmes, and ten thousand volunteers from the neighbouring departments, together with a small band of outlaws, lured from Paris by the high pay promised to them, and headed by Santerre, were the only troops they for the time could oppose to the Vendéans, who continued for some time to be victorious; but alas! even among this virtuous and peaceful people, civil war had awakened fierce passions, and many a ruthless deed was committed.

On all sides dangers were accumulating. The whole of Bretagne and Normandy was expected to revolt. At the same time the Girondins of the south were making warlike preparations, and Bordeaux and Marseilles threatened to march troops against the convention, to protect their representatives. At Lyons the sections and the municipality were on the eve of battle, and in Corsica a revolt, suscitated by Paoli, was on the point of breaking out.

Abroad, matters were at this juncture in an equally alarming state. The Duke of Coburg being reinforced by an army of English and Dutch, under the command of the Duke of York, had passed the frontiers, and had defeated the army under Dampierre. This commander was killed in the engagement. The Austrians advanced against Valenciennes, and the French were obliged to retreat behind the Scheldt, between Bouchain and Cambrai. On the Rhine, Custine, in consequence of a series of disastrous mistakes, was obliged to give up one place after the other, was finally driven back to Strasbourg, and completely defeated. On the 17th May he gave in his resignation, but the convention sent him to the army of the north, where he was soon to commit new faults, to be expiated on the scaffold. In Savoy both parties remained on the defensive. In the county of Nice the French army, reduced to fifteen thousand men, had in vain attempted to throw the Piedmontese back beyond the Alps, and

had finally been defeated. In the Pyrenees the French were not more successful. The Spaniards had advanced as far as Perpignan, and Deflers, who was charged with guarding this frontier, was defeated on the 19th of May.

All these disasters only the more inflamed the passions of the convention; the mutual hatred and distrust of the two parties were daily manifested in the most scandalous scenes. The Mountainists, who knew no other remedies than violent ones, decreed, that the *maximum* price should be placed on corn, and that a forced loan of one milliard of francs should be levied on the rich; while they continued to urge the necessity of exterminating the Girondins. These, in their turn, denounced the plots laid against them; demanded the dismissal of the municipal authorities of Paris; and proposed that the convention should be removed to Bourges. However, a compromise was entered into, and it was finally decreed that a commission of twelve representatives should inquire into the acts of the commune, and into the plots which threatened the representatives of the nation. But this commission, entirely composed of Girondins, immediately revealed the intentions of their party, by suppressing the revolutionary tribunals; by threatening the commune; and by allowing a report to be current that it intended likewise to suppress the extraordinary tribunal. By these measures the Girondins sealed their own doom; they had not the necessary power for putting them into execution; and they raised a storm which they had not the means of resisting. Commissaries, chosen by the sections, immediately formed themselves into a *central revolutionary committee*, whose first step was to propose to *Septemberize* the twenty-two most obnoxious members among the Girondins. The commission of twelve, apprized of these proceedings, issued orders for arresting the commissaries of the sections, and likewise Hébert, who, in his disgusting journal, had



expressed approbation of the projects of the revolutionary committee.

The *conseil général*, of which Hébert was a member, considered itself attacked in the person of this disgraceful magistrate, 'who depraved the people by his barefaced wickedness, and his openly avowed atheism;' the sections and the clubs declared themselves *en permanence*, and the commune commenced the attack by insisting upon the punishment of the twelve members (25th May, 1793).

Indignant at this new outrage, Isnard, the most vehement of the Girondins, allowed himself to utter violent threats against Paris, in case the sanctity of the National Assembly were violated. His words excited the fury of the Jacobins beyond all bounds. From this day until the 2nd of June, Paris was in a state of the utmost tumult, and the convention was more like an arena of gladiators, than like the legislative assembly of a free people. The Gironde was doomed to meet on the 2nd of June the fate under which royalty had succumbed on the 10th of August. The people, in a state of declared and organized insurrection, on that day surrounded the convention with arms and cannon, and demanded the proscription of the twenty-two members. Resistance was vain. The *sovereign* people exercised their sovereignty over their representatives, as they had formerly done over their monarch. As soon as the proscribed members were arrested, the people dispersed; but the convention had caught a glimpse of the sword of Damocles suspended over its head, and thenceforward it no longer appears in the character of a deliberative assembly, but merely in that of an ever-assenting council of state.

The fall of the Girondins left that party triumphant which may be considered as representing the feelings and opinions that had been from the commencement of the Revolution working in the dark depths of

society, and had by frequent irruptions forewarned the country of the devastation that was to ensue, when they should have overcome all resistance. Yet, even in our day, the Terrorists find their apologists, and the countless and unequalled crimes with which they have stained the annals of history, are represented as sublime efforts to save their country. But in the name of patriotism, liberty, and every noble and elevated sentiment that graces human nature, let us protest against such men as Robespierre, Marat, Couthon, St. Just, and all their infamous associates, being ranked among the defenders of such sentiments; let us not debase these by believing that they could be the instigators of deeds such as those committed during the reign of terror; let us not confuse our ideas of right and wrong by mistaking the desperate deeds of a band of outlaws, for the heroic sacrifices of despairing patriotism. France was saved by the military bravery of her sons, who, employed on the frontiers against a foreign foe, and absent from the scenes in the interior which degraded the nature of those who remained spectators of them, were inspired by the love of their country, and their hatred of a foreign yoke, and not by the abject feeling of fear.

Some of the Girondins had on the 2nd of June voluntarily submitted to the orders of arrest issued against them by the triumphant faction, determined to stand their trial, and to prove their innocence; but the greater number fled to their constituents, calling upon them to save the country from the *anarchists* of Paris, who had usurped the whole power of the people. More than fifty departments were in consequence soon in open insurrection, and Caën, Bordeaux, Marseilles, and Lyons, the central points of these different movements, had their insurrectional assemblies, committees, &c., which arrogated to themselves the same powers as did those of Paris; and while all were voting and declaring the unity and indivisibility of the

Republic, the state was in reality as perfectly divided by the contending factions of the Republic, as it had ever been by contending princes, and every spot of France was the theatre of bloody battles between men all professing the same principles, and according to their own assurances, aiming at the same end—liberty. In La Vendée alone, this word was not made the pretext of the insurrection. There, the victorious Cathelineau, now at the head of sixty thousand men, had proclaimed the poor incarcerated little Dauphin, King, under the name of Louis XVII., and denominated the Vendean army *royal and catholic*. In the Cévennes, thirty thousand peasants had likewise unfurled the royal banners, and threatened to join the Vendéans, while the foreign foes pressed forward on all sides. Valenciennes and Mayence were reduced to the last extremity; Bellegarde had been taken (24th June). The armies of the Alps and the Pyrenees were cut off from all communication with Paris by the insurrection in the south, and were on the point of separating to march against the insurgents. Corsica, also in a state of insurrection, threatened to surrender itself to the English, whose vessels covered all the seas, took possession of the French colonies, made descents upon the coasts of France, and blockaded all her ports. The emigrants, gathering together on all points near the French frontiers, now even entered Lyons, where the Mountainists had been completely defeated by the other party, and their leader, Chalier, with three of his accomplices, had perished on the scaffold.

But perilous as this situation was, these were far from being the only evils which pressed upon the unhappy country. The scarcity and high price of corn continued to increase. The people daily fought at the bakers' doors to obtain only a scanty supply of bread. In vain those who were in want of the necessaries of life, tried to obtain them in exchange for their assig-

nats; the venders refused to receive the worthless paper money, preferring to keep their merchandize. The sufferings of the people rose to an intolerable degree. Constant complaints were heard against the monopolists (*accapareurs*) who bought up the commodities, and against the jobbers who raised the prices, and who discredited the assignats by their traffic.

The government, in the same distressed state as the people, had no other money, wherewith to defray its expenses, but these very assignats, and were obliged to give them in numbers four or five times greater than their nominal value, to pay for services which might otherwise have been obtained at a fourth or fifth of the cost; yet they trembled to issue more assignats, fearful of still further depreciating them; and no other means remained to provide for the subsistence of the people and of the government but recourse to new illegalities. The revolutionists had commenced by a *forced* circulation of the anticipated value of the property of the nobles and the clergy, of which they had taken possession, under the name of national property, and they had now to support this circulation by *forced* means. The specie, remaining as a real measure of the value of money, became coveted by all when the assignats began to be considered as mere fictitious representatives of wealth, and the desire for obtaining specie in exchange for assignats was so great, that the latter were still more discredited by the abundance in which they were given. To prevent this evil, the convention, in spite of the resistance of the Girondins, decreed, that whoever exchanged a certain quantity of silver or gold for a greater nominal quantity of assignats, should be punished with six years imprisonment, and the same punishment was to be inflicted on those who should demand a different price for their merchandize, according to whether the payment were made in specie or in assignats. But matters were only made worse by this in-

terference. In June one franc in silver was worth three francs in assignats; and in August it had risen in value to six francs in assignats. The merchants, of course, insisted on being paid for their goods according to this value, and the unhappy working men, who received their pay in assignats according to the nominal value of them, while they had to purchase the necessities of life according to the value of specie, were, of course, reduced to the greatest misery, which they, in their ignorance, still farther aggravated by the violence to which they were driven by the frenzy of despair. To obviate this evil of the rise of prices, *maximum* prices had been fixed, and those who were convicted of having sold or bought above these prices, were punished with confiscation of the goods in question, and with a fine of from three hundred to a thousand francs. The most oppressive police interference was rendered necessary by these measures; and, added to all the other domiciliary visits to which the French had to submit during the reign of *unrestrained liberty*, were those for ascertaining the quantity of bread they had in their houses. The commune of Paris, adding its police regulations to those of the convention, had besides regulated the distribution of bread at the bakers' shops. No one was allowed to appear there without a card of safety (*carte de sureté*). On these cards, issued by the revolutionary committees, the quantity of bread was mentioned, which the person presenting it was entitled to receive, and this quantity was regulated according to the number of individuals belonging to the family. Even the order to be maintained outside the baker's door was regulated by these authorities. To avoid confusion, a rope was fastened to the door, and every new comer took hold of it, so as to be sure of not losing his right of precedence. Wicked women\*,

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\* Nothing so strongly paints the state of demoralization that prevailed in France at that period, as the disgraceful part which the women took in

however, often cut the rope, and produced such tumultuous scenes, that it was necessary to put them down by force of arms\*. But it was not bread alone that was dear, every necessary of life was as difficult to obtain, and the people, blind to its own faults, persisted in attributing all the mischief to those they denominated the monopolists, and sought redress for suffering in crime. Robbery and pillage became so common, that the commune directed the Mayor Pache to issue the following laconic proclamation.

‘Paris contains seven hundred thousand inhabitants; the soil of Paris produces nothing for their food, their apparel, nor their whole subsistence. Paris must therefore procure all its provisions from the other departments, and from foreign countries.

‘If when goods and merchandize arrive in Paris, the inhabitants will pillage them, no more shall be sent; Paris will then not have anything for the sustenance and the clothing of its numerous inhabitants, and seven hundred thousand men, deprived of everything, will devour each other.’

The people ceased to pillage; but their distrust and hatred continued against those who, being richer, were able to speculate, when to the people was left nothing but to starve; these hostile feelings were, alas! not unfounded, for even members of the convention, those who spoke the loudest of equality and fraternity, were not ashamed to enrich themselves by iniquitous means.

These difficulties accumulated on all sides, and the fact of the ruling faction in France having for a time been able to contend against, and in a certain measure to subdue them, has probably given rise to that enthu-

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every scene of riot and bloodshed. What must not be the moral degeneracy of the people, when the guardian of the peaceful hearth, the mother of the family, is mixing in scenes of wild and unbridled passion, is imbruing her own hands in blood, is spurring on her husband and sons to lawless deeds, instead of awaiting them at home to exercise over them the purifying influence of a calm and holy spirit.

\* THIERS.

siasm, which has so far blinded historians, even of the present day, as to lead them to excuse as necessary the means which this faction used. But even this excuse, immoral and demoralizing as it is, vanishes, when we see that the greatest difficulties had disappeared, before the most extreme measures were put in action, and that the iniquities committed by the Terrorists stood in no possible connection with the difficulties they had to contend with. Streams of blood flowing on the scaffold, could not by any possibility fill the government coffers, and thousands of French men and women sacrificed on the guillotine, could not repel the foreign foe from the frontiers.

Two months after the expulsion of the Girondins from the convention, matters had already taken a much more favourable turn for the Mountainists. The foreign armies, instead of taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country, and using prompt and energetic measures, acted slowly and feebly, while the Girondins, though having the greater part of the country on their side, were undecided and disunited. The talents which had but too well sufficed for destruction, were far from being great enough for reconstruction; though these men, in their short-sighted incapacity, had had no scruples as long as the question was merely to destroy monarchy and every vestige of the ancient state of things, they, nevertheless, were sincerely attached to their country, which they saw must inevitably fall a prey to foreigners if the civil war between Mountainists and Girondins was to continue. They had not the *energy of crime*, which their opponents possessed; being therefore unable to subject the other party, they were themselves obliged to yield.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

Decree against the Insurgents—Their submission—Charlotte Corday kills Marat—Honours shown to his memory—The Vendéans defeated—Submission of the South—Lyons continues in revolt—Toulon surrenders in trust to the English—The Committee of Public Safety—Decrees of the Convention—Increase in severity—Vigorous measures for carrying on the War—Revolutionary Army—Arrests made by authority of the Revolutionary Committees—The Reign of Terror—Progress of the War—The surrender of Lyons—Fall of Toulon—The Vendéans still further reduced—Dreadful Tyranny—Execution of the Queen—of the Princess Elizabeth—of the Girondins—Execution of numberless Victims—Increasing number of Prisoners—Instances of sublime virtue—of disgusting levity—Atrocities at Lyons—at Nantes.

THE convention had, immediately after the 2nd of June, decreed that all the absent deputies had forfeited their places, and that these were to be filled by their substitutes (*suppléants*); that the instigators of the insurrections in the departments, the authorities of those departments, and the leaders of the insurgents, were outlawed, and orders were given to the troops of the convention to attack the insurgents on all points. A constitution, which had been framed in *eight days*, was then accepted by the convention on the 24th June, and with this constitution in their hand they offered peace or extermination to the Girondin insurgents, who submitted, being at that moment farther intimidated by the defeat of their general, Wimpfen, who, by his proposition to them to seek succours from the English, had revealed that he was only a royalist in disguise. The deputies of this party, who had been assembled at Caën, fled to Bordeaux, which however also soon accepted the new constitution, and received within its walls the two representatives, Tallien and Ysabeau, sent thither by the convention, to reinstate Mountainists in the municipality, to disarm the inhabitants, and to erect scaffolds for the pro-



scribed, against whom the hatred of the Mountainists had been still farther exasperated by the death of Marat, which was attributed to their machinations.

Marat, of all the hideous abortions of those times the most hideous, had been killed in his bath by Charlotte Corday, a beautiful and intellectual young woman of Caën, of a gentle heart but an ardent mind, glowing with love of her country, and conceiving its future destinies entirely hanging upon the success of the Girondins. In Marat she saw their most ferocious, (and she therefore thought) their most dangerous opponent and persecutor, and such was the confusion of moral perceptions, even of the best in France, at that day, that she could devise no better means of serving what she considered the cause of virtue, than the commission of a crime. She secretly left her family at Caën, and repaired to Paris, where she obtained an interview with Marat, under pretext of having something of importance to reveal to him about the Girondins. She was introduced to him while he was lying in his bath, so anxious was he to lose no time in obtaining the intelligence she had to communicate. The young girl reported to him what she had seen of the Girondin movement at Caën. Marat having asked the names of the deputies gathered together there, Charlotte Corday fixed her eyes steadily on him, while she repeated the names, and he wrote them down. 'That is well,' said the bloody monster, 'they shall all go to the guillotine!' And with these words on his lips, he was sent to answer before God for the crimes\* with which he had defiled the earth; the young girl's dagger was buried in his breast. She was immediately arrested, and when brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal exhibited in her answers the same heroic enthusiasm: 'I have killed,' said

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\* There is no particular criminal *deed* attributed to Marat by the historians of those times. But no crime can equal that of polluting the mind of a whole nation.

she, 'one man to save a hundred thousand—a depraved wretch, to save the innocent; a ferocious monster, to procure peace to my country.'

Charlotte Corday had rid the world of a monster; she had forgotten the teachings of Him who has told us not to do evil that good may come from it, and thinking that she had acted virtuously, she died with the fortitude such a feeling inspires. But the populace could scarcely await the moment, so impatient were they to be revenged on the murderess of 'the people's friend;' and the incredible honours shown to the memory of this depraved wretch, gives a picture of moral degradation which the mind can with difficulty conceive. The Cordelier Club raised an altar to his heart, his portrait was seen everywhere, and the convention decreed that his earthly remains should be deposited in the Pantheon.

In the west and the south, events also turned to the advantage of the convention. The Vendéans, who limited their enterprises to taking the towns of their own provinces, which were as zealously republican as the peasantry were royalist, instead of taking advantage of their victories, to extend their power beyond the limits of their part of the country, concentrated all their forces for an attack against Nantes, the chief town of that neighbourhood, and which seemed to them even more important than Paris. For the first time the armies of Upper and Lower Vendée united, but in vain; Nantes heroically repelled the attack of their vastly superior numbers, and Cathelineau, to whom was given the command of the joint armies, lost his life in the affair. Nantes was saved for the convention, and the power of the Vendéans was broken. Thirty thousand insurgents in the south were at the same time put down by the deputy Fabre de l'Hérault, and an unexpected victory over the Spaniards in Roussillon achieved the submission of the south.

Lyons continued in open revolt, raised an army of twenty thousand men, which it placed under the command of two royalists, Précý and Virieu, and opened negotiations with the king of Sardinia. At Marseilles, where the royalists also had the ascendancy, the new constitution was rejected; and ten thousand men were marched towards Avignon, but these were beaten by five or six thousand republicans, a detachment from the army of the Alps, who then took possession of Marseilles, and re-established the authority of the convention in that town (25th August, 1793). The royalists of Provence then sought refuge in Toulon, which strongly participated in their hatred of the Mountainist faction, many of whom had perished on the scaffold. The Toulonnaise, closing their gates upon the republican forces, proclaimed Louis XVII. king, and delivered up their port to the English fleet, under Admiral Hood (27th August). Mayence and Valenciennes were in the hands of the enemy, the first since 25th July, the second since 28th of the same month.

On the 27th of July, 1793, the committee of public safety, which had been accused of weakness, was renewed, and was this time composed of men, who certainly had the energy not to shrink before any measures. These men, who governed France from the 10th of July, 1793, until the 27th of July, 1794, were Barrère, Jean-Bon-Saint-André, Couthon, Héroult-Séchelles, Saint-Just, Robert Lindet, Prieur de la Marne, Robespierre, Carnot, Prieur de la Côte-d'Or, Billaud-Varennes, and Collot d'Herbois. On the proposition of this committee, the convention immediately decreed: That the English government\* should be denounced to all nations, and even to the English, as having in its pay assassins and incendiaries. That

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\* The English Government was particularly hated by the Jacobins, and Pitt was accused of using the most atrocious means for putting down the Revolution.

Pitt should be declared the enemy of the human race; that all British subjects in France should be arrested; and all British goods prohibited from entering the country. That Marie Antoinette should be summoned before the revolutionary tribunal. That the two and twenty fugitive Girondins should be declared outlawed, and all the others be put under arrest to stand their trial. That the royal tombs at St. Denis should be destroyed; the property of all outlawed persons be confiscated; and that the garrison which had hitherto occupied Mayence should be removed to La Vendée, and the population of that tract of country be transplanted, its harvest destroyed, its houses demolished, its woods burnt down, and the inhabitants of the neighbouring departments, from the age of eighteen to that of sixty, be transplanted thither.

But these measures, tyrannical and despotic as they were, were soon to be thrown into the shade by others still more atrocious. On the 10th of August the acceptance of the constitution by the primary assemblies, convoked for the occasion, was celebrated at Paris, by a symbolical pagan fête, in which the statues of Nature and Reason, the divinities of the revolutionists, played the most prominent part, and the enthusiasm inspired by the spectacles it offered, was expressed in a demand made to the convention by the commissaries of the sections to order a *levée en masse*, in order to save the republic. In accordance with which, the convention decreed (23rd August): 'From that moment until the soil of France should be purged of its enemies, the French of both sexes and all ages should be in permanent requisition for the service of the armies.' The particular functions of all were regularly laid down. Besides this, the public edifices were converted into barracks, the public squares into military workshops, and the floors of all cellars were ordered to be washed, to extract from them the saltpetre they might contain. In a word, the whole of France was converted into one

vast camp, and the sword of the authorities rivalled those of the armies, in spreading havoc and devastation. A revolutionary army of six thousand soldiers, and one thousand artillery men, was placed at the disposal of the convention, to enforce the execution of its orders. Every poor citizen was allowed forty sous a day, that he might assist in the assembly of the sections, and give the majority to the lower classes; and the public functionaries were placed under the inspection of the clubs. It was further decreed that all suspected persons should be kept in prison, until peace was re-established: by suspected persons were understood all those who, by words, actions, or writings, had shown themselves partisans of royalty or of federalism, all relatives of emigrants, all discharged functionaries, &c. The true definition of what was meant by suspected persons in those days, would have been all whose life or liberty might in any way interfere with the convenience of those who had the power to take it. Such it showed itself to be in its workings. The arrests were made by the revolutionary committees established in every section of the communes, and these were responsible to the committee for *general safety*. The substance of the revolutionary code, says Toulangeon, was: 'Be it known to all Frenchmen, that the life, the liberty, and the property of every one of them, is at the arbitrary disposal of ten men, whom the convention has fixed upon: they will dispose of your persons by the acts of a tribunal, which shall judge, without any regular forms and indictments; pronounce upon its own view of the case; and neither admit any means of defence or mode of appeal. At the first requisition of delegates from this authority, you shall march to join the armies; you shall deliver up, without delay or remonstrance, whatever they may think proper to take from your moveable property, at whatever price they shall choose to fix, represented to you by any token that it may be convenient to them to issue. Before

these delegates of established authority, all other authorities shall cease; and you shall acknowledge as law, and you shall immediately execute, whatever they may think proper to prescribe. Every infraction of these regulations shall instantly be followed by death.' 'The system,' continues the same author, 'was simply that of terror, and never had a policy an effect so prompt, so general, and so sure; one head struck off, and a thousand bent themselves down at the very sight of the hatchet, which was now become the image of the law; the sentiment of fear and respect, which the apparatus of public justice always imposes, now struck an icebolt into every heart, and commanded at once the exertion of every arm. Some, at the first signal, and often without waiting for the signal, flew to the armies on the frontiers, as to an asylum; others, detained near the functionaries of the law, lent their ministry to the perpetration of murders, that were sanctioned by a legal form and appearance; and those who were marked out for the victims, having no resource, neither in the laws themselves, nor in any public force or authority, resigned themselves without further resistance, and appealed, while expiring, to the justice of heaven and to posterity\*.'

The soldiers of France, the only *active* part of the nation which during this wretched period showed itself worthy of esteem, were in the meanwhile doing their duty, but with variable success. The old system of war had been superseded by a new one, in which, according to the principles of Carnot, the want of art was supplied by numbers, and by audacity; a manner which was quite in accordance with the untutored genius of the young men, who, by favour of the republican system, were able to rise from the ranks to the

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\* Toulangeon's evidence cannot be suspected of exaggeration, as he is one of those historians who excuse, on the plea of necessity, these atrocious measures.

higher grades; and many of whom have since filled the world with their renown.

After having taken Valenciennes and Condé, blockaded Maubeuge and Le Quesnoy, the enemy, under the command of the Duke of York, had marched upon Cassel, Hondscote, and Furnes, and laid siege to Dunkirk. The committee of public safety, dissatisfied with Custine, who was accused of being the cause of the loss of Valenciennes, had replaced him by General Houchard. The enemy, until that period victorious, was defeated at Hondscote, and forced to retreat. A military reaction commenced with the decisive measures of the committee of public safety. Houchard himself was dismissed. Jourdain took the command of the army of the north, gained the important victory of Watignies, against the Prince of Coburg, forced the enemy to raise the siege of Maubeuge, and reassumed the offensive on the frontier. The armies of the Rhine and the Moselle, discouraged after the loss of Mayence, had fallen back upon the Sarre and the Lauter; but the Prussian and Austrian generals, who were opposed to them, not being in good intelligence with each other, failed to take advantage of this discouragement, and the French were, after two months spent in insignificant skirmishes, able again to take the offensive. They were, however, defeated at Pirmasens (13th October, 1793), and were soon after obliged to retire, the army of the Rhine to Saverne, and the army of the Moselle to Sarreguemines. In consequence of these defeats, the authorities of Strasbourg conspired to deliver up the town to the enemy; and the whole of Alsace was inundated with emigrants, who sought to win for their cause the population of this province, which had not yet imbibed the revolutionary ideas. But the committee immediately sent Lebas and St. Just thither to counteract these movements, and named Hoche to the command of the army of the Moselle, and Pichegru to that of the Rhine. The two

representatives ordered neighbouring departments to rise, re-organized the army, punished the conspirators, and made every one tremble at the tyrannical energy so strikingly manifested in their severe and laconic orders. 'Ten thousand men belonging to the army,' said these orders, 'are shoeless; you must *unshoe* (*déchausser*) the aristocrats of Strasbourg, and to-morrow before ten o'clock the ten thousand pair of shoes must be on their way to general quarters. All the cloaks of the citizens of Strasbourg are required for the army: they must be delivered to-morrow evening in the magazines of the republic. The municipality of Strasbourg must keep in readiness within four-and-twenty hours, in the houses of the rich inhabitants, two thousand beds to be delivered up to the soldiers. A loan of nine millions must be immediately levied upon the rich, two millions of which shall be appropriated to the indigent, one million to the town, and six millions to the army. The richest individual subjected to this tax, who has not within four-and-twenty hours complied with this order, shall be publicly exposed for three hours on the scaffolding of the guillotine.' The two young republican generals on their side took such efficient steps, that the enemy soon lost the recently acquired advantages, and were obliged to withdraw beyond the Rhine (28th December), while the French took up their winter quarters in the Palatinate. In the Pyrenees the French armies were less fortunate; after repeated engagements with the Spaniards, who continued to press forward, and in which the victory was sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, the French army at the close of the year (1793), having lost its commander, Fabre de l'Hérault, had retired under the walls of Perpignan in a state of complete discouragement.

The principal efforts of the committee were directed against Lyons, Toulon, and La Vendée, the subjection of the insurgents in the interior being of the most



vital importance, even with regard to resistance to the foreign foes. Twenty-five thousand Piedmontese, descending the Alps, were marching to the aid of Lyons, which during six weeks had been blockaded, and had suffered a severe bombardment by a detachment of the army of the Alps, under Dubois-Crancé, when they were attacked by Kellermann, at the head of twelve thousand newly levied troops, and thrown back into their own country. The victorious troops then joined the besiegers, and, formed with the *levy en masse* of Auvergne, which had also been brought thither by Couthon, an army of forty thousand men. The inhabitants of Lyons, reduced by famine, and hoping to save their town from utter devastation, surrendered, without conditions, on the 9th October, 1793. The besieging army then divided: one division took up its former position in Savoy, and the other moved towards Toulon, to join the small army which for two months had been blockading this town. In consequence of the able attack, directed by a young artillery officer—Napoleon Bonaparte, a name which was soon to eclipse every other in the annals of France—the forts L'Eguillette and Balaguier, which commanded the city, were taken. No longer being able to hold the town, the English considered it advisable to evacuate the place without delay. The wretched inhabitants crowded to the shores, and demanded their promised protection; great efforts were made, and thousands were conveyed on board the shipping, but thousands more were left to suffer all that the rage and vengeance of their countrymen could inflict. Fire was set to the arsenals, the docks, and to the French ships in the port. The republicans, seeing the flames rising from the fort, rushed against the gates of the city, with cries of rage, and entered the half-deserted town on the 19th December.

In La Vendée the war was carried on with extreme cruelty and intolerable sufferings on both sides, and

with varying success. The Vendéans, however, had never regained their full strength after the defeat of Nantes, and at length, having lost nearly all their leaders except the young Larochejacquelin, Charette, and Stofflet\*, they marched about in large bands without plan or object, strewing their path with the dead bodies of their wives and children, who dropped down from want of food and other sufferings. On the 12th of December, the republican general, Marceau, attacked them in the streets of the town of Mans, where eighteen thousand of them, comprising women and children, were regularly butchered. Those that escaped were again attacked on the 22nd of December, and were all taken or killed, with the exception of about a thousand men who escaped into Bretagne. But La Vendée nevertheless continued in a very troubled state, the peasantry, though reduced, having nowise submitted.

The horrors of war were nothing compared to the fearful ravages committed by the Committee of Public Safety, in the name of the country which they were deluging with the blood of its innocent children.

A historian, who was an eye-witness of the scenes he describes, and personally acquainted with the principal victims of this inhuman system, speaks of it as follows: 'What then was this revolutionary government decreed by the Convention? It seems a contradiction in terms, but I can speak of its effects: every right, civil and political, was thrown into disorder and even destroyed; the liberty of the press, and all liberty of thought, were at an end; the whole people were divided into two classes, the privileged and the proscribed; property was violated without the slightest ceremony; *lettres de cachet* were re-established and

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\* It is impossible in this work to do more than to glance at the struggles of the unhappy Vendéans. For a full detail of this dreadful war of La Vendée, and of its heroic leaders, the reader is referred to the intensely interesting Memoirs of Madame Larochejacquelin.

multiplied in the most scandalous manner; the asylum of our dwellings were exposed to an inquisition of the most tyrannical nature; the forms of justice were stripped of every appearance of humanity and honour. France covered with lock-up houses and prisons; all the excesses of anarchy and despotism struggling with each other in noisy commotion, amid a confused multitude of committees of every possible name and nature; terror and consternation in every heart; the scaffold devouring every day a hundred victims, and threatening every day to devour a still greater number; in every house, an universal melancholy and mourning, in every public street and place the silence of the tomb. Such was this incredible system, that annihilated all persons, all property, every thing. War was waged against nature in her tenderest emotions. Was a tear shed over the tomb of a father, a wife, a friend, it was, according to these Jacobins, a robbery of the republic. Grief, they held, was not to be confined within domestic limits. Not to rejoice when the Jacobins rejoiced, not to rejoice, though in the loss of relations and in the severing of all ties that bind one to existence, was to conspire against the republic\*.

The two most illustrious of the victims, who fell a sacrifice to the passions or the madness of those who ruled in France, and the most deserving of our compassion on account of the high position from which they had fallen, and the thousand tortures they had to endure before death put an end to their sufferings, were the Queen and the Princess Elizabeth.

They had continued in rigorous confinement since the death of the king, and every day had brought them new humiliations, new proofs of the baseness of those in whose power they were, a baseness which was not satisfied, until the poor sickly little Dauphin was torn from his mother, to whose other cruel trials, were

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\* DESODARDS.

thus added the image of her suffering child, delivered over to the tender mercies of a brutal and unfeeling republican, his little heart overwhelmed with an experience of misery far beyond his years. On the 2nd of August, the Queen was, according to a decree of the Convention, removed from the Temple to the Conciergerie, where she was lodged in a low, narrow, damp room upon the ground floor. She there breathed the putrid air exhaled in the neighbourhood. Girths tied together in several places with ropes in a paltry frame, a ragged mattress, a decayed paillasse, and an old worn-out dirty blanket, composed the bed of the Queen of France\*. Placed before the tribunal, she replied with great calmness to the accusations brought against her, of having dilapidated the treasury, of having called in the aid of the foreigners, of having exercised a culpable influence over the king, &c. ; she met with the greatest dignity the insults of her inhuman judges. Transported to the guillotine on a common tumbril, on the 16th of October, 1793, she died, manifesting the same resignation and fortitude with which she had throughout borne her sufferings.

The Princess Elizabeth, whose virtuous life was unsullied by a single fault, met the same fate on the 10th of May, 1794†. When the princess was brought before the revolutionary tribunal, she appeared with the gentle dignity that belonged to her before her judges, who assailed her in the harshest manner and in terms the most offensive, but when they proceeded to speak of her brother as a tyrant, the christian spirit even of this angel of piety and meekness, emitted a hasty spark, and she exclaimed, ‘Tyrant ! Had my brother been a tyrant, neither you nor I had filled the places which we now do‡.’

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\* HUÉ.

† She was accused of having transmitted some jews to her emigrant brothers.

‡ TOULONGEON.

The queen was followed in death by as many of the Girondins as were in the power of the committee. They pleaded so eloquently for themselves, that Robespierre, to guard in future against the embarrassment which such eloquence caused even the shameless judges of such a tribunal as that before which they stood, had a decree passed, authorising the jury to declare themselves, after three days' debates, sufficiently informed of the case before them. The Girondins died as they had lived, as enthusiasts, and with the proud indifference to pain of the Stoics, not with the sublimer endurance of Christians.

One of them, Valazé, put an end to his own life with a knife, his companions marched to the scaffold singing the Marseillaise. Barbaroux was executed at Bordeaux; others of their party, Pétion, Buzot, Condorcet, &c., fell by their own hand, to avoid the shame of a public execution, and even the calm and moderate Roland stabbed himself, on learning that his young and enthusiastic wife had been made to expiate on the scaffold the sin of not having gone so far in her blind love of liberty as those who had profited but too well by the teachings of her party. 'Oh! liberty what crimes are committed in thy name:' were her dying words. Oh! that she had made this discovery sooner! Bailly was executed on the Champ de Mars, with refinements of cruelty. The Duke of Orleans, completely disgusted with the world, in which he himself had played a most disgusting part, died with utter indifference. (6th Nov.) The Girondins, Kersaint, Manuel, Rabaud Saint Etienne, were the next victims; after them the Feuillants Barnave and Duport-Dutertre; then the generals Biron, Houchard, Custine, Brunet, Lamarliere, Luckner. But volumes\* would not hold

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\* The numbers of accused, confined in the prisons of Paris alone, on the 1st September, 1793, were 597; 1st October, 2400; 1st November, 3203; 1st December, 4130; and six months after, just before the fall of Robespierre, they amounted to 11,400.

the names of those who fell the victims of the ferocious monsters of hypocrisy, who dared to profane the sacred image of liberty, by presenting it as a famished vulture that could never be sufficiently gorged with human blood. Infancy and age, grace and beauty, were all alike the prey of this false image, and human life was sported with, without the slightest shame or remorse. Often one person arrested, received an act of accusation intended for another. Mistakes of the most inconceivable nature were made with impunity: the Dowager Duchess of Biron was judged upon an act of accusation drawn up against her agent. A young man of only twenty, was taken to execution for having a son then bearing arms (as it was alleged) against France. Another young man of sixteen, of the name of Mallet, was brought before the tribunal, but a man of the name of Bellay, of the age of forty, was the intended prisoner. 'What is your age?' said the president, looking at him with some surprise. 'Sixteen.' 'Well, you are quite forty in crime,' replied the bloody magistrate, 'take him away to the guillotine.' From every corner of France victims were brought in carts to the Conciergerie. This prison was emptied and refilled every day, by daily massacres, and by transfers from other prisons. These removals were made when it was dark; in the fear, no doubt, that the sensibility of the spectators might be excited by the deplorable state of the prisoners. Fifty or sixty poor creatures securely bound with cords, conducted by men of ferocious aspect, a drawn sabre in one hand, and a lighted torch in the other, passed in this manner through the silence of the night. The passenger, who happened to meet them, had to keep his pity well concealed in the bottom of his heart, if he wished to preserve his own liberty: a sigh that had escaped him, would instantly have united him to the unhappy beings who composed the funeral train before him. The prisons multiplied in every quarter of Paris, and were the

abode of every possible species of suffering. The Committee of Public Safety had calculated the quantity of air and light that was necessary for the mere existence of their victims. The despair that reigned in the vaults of these sepulchres, presented itself in forms the most terrific; one finished his unhappy existence by poison; another dispatched himself by a nail, that he buried in his heart; one opened his veins with the first sharp instrument that he could seize; another dashed his head against the bars of the casements; some lost their reason; those who had sufficient fortitude waited patiently for the executioner, or gave into the snares which they knew were laid for them by the spies that surrounded them. Every house of arrest was required to furnish a certain number of victims. The turnkeys went with these mandates of accusation from chamber to chamber in the dead of the night; the prisoners, starting from their sleep, at the voice of their Cerberus, supposed their end had arrived; and it was thus that warrants of death for thirty, threw into a state of consternation many hundreds. At first the officers of justice ranged fifteen at a time in their carts, which Barrère called 'live coffins,' soon after thirty, and about the time of the fall of Robespierre, preparations had been made for the execution of a hundred and fifty at a time. An aqueduct had been contrived to carry off the blood\*. Sometimes whole generations were destroyed in a day. Malesherbes, at the age of eighty, perished with his sister, his daughter, his son-in-law, his grandson, and his granddaughter; Montmorin with his son; four of the family of Brienne. Forty young women were brought to the guillotine for having danced at a ball given by the King of Prussia at Verdun; and twenty-two peasant women were sacrificed whose husbands had been executed in La Vendée.

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\* DESODARDS.

But amidst these scenes of cruelty and despair, are not wanting traits of sublime patience, of heroic self-sacrificing affection, and dignified self respect, which cheer the heart with the feeling, that over the soul, tyranny can exercise no power. A father and a son were confined in the same prison: the son was summoned to the revolutionary tribunal, but was out of the way at the moment. The father taking advantage of his absence, presented himself in his stead to the turnkey, was tried and condemned, and died in the hope of having saved the life of his son. Another prisoner sacrificed himself in like manner for his brother. The wife of the commandant of Longwy, cried out 'Vive le roi,' upon learning the condemnation of her husband, and within hearing of his judges, who instantly sentenced her to die with him. 'It was all I wanted!' she then exclaimed with a triumphant smile. The Comte d'Estaing, distinguished in the naval annals of France, was asked his name. 'My name,' he said, 'is sufficiently known: when you have taken off my head, carry it to the English; they will recognise it, and pay you well for it.' Isabeau, formerly registrar of the parliament of Paris, was brought before the revolutionary tribunal, sitting in the place where the parliament used to hold its sittings. 'Do you remember this place?' asked the president. 'Oh, yes!' replied Isabeau, 'it was here that not long ago, virtue was the judge of guilt; and it is here that guilt now puts innocence to death.'

But it was not all who bore misfortune with dignity. Among those classes whose vices, whose love of pleasure, and whose blind and degraded self-love, had greatly contributed to bring about the fearful state of things that actually existed,—among these classes, pleasure was still the only thought, and frivolity was the order of the day, even within the grim walls of the prisons from which the guillotine alone could rescue them. Even in the face of death, thronged



in fetid receptacles, where they suffered from the want of air, and were deprived of all exercise, and even almost of power of motion, they knew nothing higher to fly to, in order to escape from the sense of their misery, than the gaming table and the pleasures of the palate. The prisoners of the higher class scrupulously kept up the same etiquette which they used to observe in their *salons* of the Faubourg St. Germain, formed their own society apart, and expended on the table such sums as they could yet command. After attending to their own little concerns in the morning, they assembled in the common room in the evening, worked, read, and chatted with each other, and poets recited their verses, and musicians gave their concerts, and every body laughed and amused themselves, as if some one of the mighty monarchs who had pampered them with riches and power was still seated on his throne, and the fierce demagogues that were raging without their prison walls, were still the submissive *canaille*, they could trample on at their pleasure. In the Luxemburg prison, the ladies amused themselves with acting the guillotine, and when a lady had been sufficiently practised to fall upon the chair that represented the fearful instrument of death, and go through her execution gracefully, the spectators expressed their admiration by clapping of hands and shouts of bravo\*. At a later period, the convention, jealous of the pleasures enjoyed by their victims, put an end to them, by prohibiting their assembling together, except at their meals, which were served up on large tables, where all ranks were seated together *pêle môle*, and which consisted of bad and unwholesome food, provided for them by the committee.

Of all the revolted towns, Lyons was the one that suffered most. The convention decreed its destruction, and ordered that of the houses of the poor, and the pub-

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\* MONGAILLARD, THIERS.

lic edifices, which were to be spared, a new city should be formed to bear the name of the *Freed Commune*, (commune affranchie.) Fouché and Collot d'Herbois were sent thither with two thousand men of the revolutionary army, and where destruction was the end in view, no better emissaries could have been chosen, than these two monsters in human shape. They carried on the work of destruction with ten thousand workmen, and the finest streets of the city were soon heaps of ruin. They created a commission of five judges, (similar to the murderers of September), who condemned and sent to meet their death, seven persons within one quarter of an hour, and according to their own accounts, sentenced altogether one thousand six hundred and eighty individuals to death. But the hammer and the guillotine were soon found to be too slow instruments of destruction, and mines were employed to demolish the buildings, and bombs and cannon balls to crush their inhabitants. The full consciousness, and perfect deliberation with which all the atrocities of this revolution were committed, were also evinced on this occasion by Fouché, who wrote: 'Let us exercise justice upon the model of nature! Let us take revenge on a whole nation! Let us strike like the thunderbolt!'

Caën and Marseille, having easily submitted, suffered less, but at Bordeaux, Tallien gorged himself with blood. At Toulon the commissaries of the convention steeped the earth in blood, and at Nantes, the most atrocious deeds that the imagination can picture, were exercised by Carrier, a being to whom the appellation of man can scarcely be applied. He had the inhabitants of twenty-two communes, that had already submitted, massacred; he sank in the sea, boats filled with fifteen hundred men, women, and children; he had men and women coupled together and thrown into the Loire, a mode of execution which he called *republican marriages*, and the river swallowed up so many

victims, that it was forbidden to drink of its polluted waters. 'With the sword ever ready in his hand, and blasphemies on his lips,' this low-lived Nero found worthy accomplices in the members of the revolutionary committee of Nantes, and executioners in a troop of banditti, who called themselves Marat's company. Carrier, in league with these wild beasts, himself no better than they, allowed himself and them to commit every species of crime, and the number of victims is said to have amounted to fifteen thousand. Here again the atrocities of a corrupt imagination, the wild deeds of madmen, are attributed to the love of liberty and mankind. 'It is from a love of humanity, that I purge the land of liberty of these monsters,' wrote Carrier to the convention.

In all parts of France, the same crimes were being committed, the same lying blasphemies were being pronounced, in no other way did unity exist.

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## CHAPTER XX.

Division of the prevailing Faction into three parts—Profanation of Religion—Change in the Calendar—Religion abolished—Danton and his party shocked at these excesses—*Le Vieux Cordelier*—Stigma cast upon the English—The toleration of other Religions besides the worship of Reason allowed—Fall of the Hébertists—Fall of the Dantonists—Decrees of the Convention—Robespierre's policy—The Reign of Terror at its height—The French defeated at sea; victorious on land—Distress of the people—Oppressive interference of Government—The Revolutionary Army dissolved—The Clubs suppressed—Butchery continued—Robespierre's speech—Discontent—Attempt of Ladmiral—The power of the Committee still further strengthened in consequence—Robespierre above all—Fête of the 'Universal Religion of Nature.'—Envy excited by Robespierre—*Law of 22nd Prairial*—Robespierre absents himself from the Convention—The work of blood continues with fearful rapidity—Fouquier's refinement of wickedness—Extraordinary mistakes committed—Robespierre appears again—Accusations against him—Violent commotions—Arrest of Robespierre and others—Insurrection in consequence—The prisoners retaken—Brutal manifestations—Execution of Robespierre and his colleagues.

TOWARDS the end of the year 1793, when matters without had ceased to bear so very menacing an aspect; the faction which was deluging the soil of France with the blood of its citizens, under pretence of saving the country from the danger of utter annihilation with which it was threatened by the foreign invaders, and the conspirators within who were in league with them,—this faction split into three distinct fractions, that of the *exaggerators*, headed by Hébert; that of the *moderators*, headed by Danton; and that of Robespierre, the one actually in power.

The faction of Hébert was predominant in the commune, and was supported by the vile bands which constituted the revolutionary army, and by those members of the convention, who were exercising their bloody mission at Lyons, Toulon, and Nantes. The

men of this faction represented the wildest, most ferocious, and the most insane of the notions that were afloat in France during this period of social dissolution. Their ideas of political economy were manifested, by their turning all gardens into potato fields, and by wearing wooden shoes to reduce the price of leather, while their love of equality exacted the cessation of all courtesy in mutual intercourse, and all decency in dress. They gloried in never being seen but in the dirty rags of the *sans culottes*, and in never addressing any one by any other title than that of his name. Followers of the school of Marat, they even surpassed their master in all that was atrocious, and what he only pictured to himself in the ravings of his perverted imagination, they had the power and the will to put into practice. '*Le père Duchêne*\*,' said Camille Desmoulins, 'in order to escape from his remorse, and from his calumnies, needs more powerful intoxication than that of wine; he requires continually to lick the blood that flows at the foot of the guillotine†.' These men were aiming to convert the executioner's hatchet which they so ably wielded into a regular sceptre of government, and to supersede the committee which did not go through the murderous work with sufficient dispatch for them. But they masked the plans which they entertained against the convention and the committee, under their hatred to Danton and his adherents, whom they accused of seeking to make the revolution retrograde; while they showed the lengths to which their inclinations would lead them, by a measure which excited much disgust even at that time, but which, however, was only the continuance of the same course in which the revolution had hitherto moved. The convention had despoiled the churches of their sacred vases, had applauded the

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\* This was the name under which Hébert wrote his infamous journal.

† *Le Vieux Cordelier*, No. 4. A paper edited by Camille Desmoulins.

priests who broke the laws of the church, had allowed the commune to interdict public worship, to take the crosses from the graves in the cemeteries, to change the names of the streets designated by those of saints, and to close the seminaries. It had further authorized its commissioners 'to imprison the black animals by dozens,' and had applauded one of its members, Dupont, who loudly proclaimed, 'Nature and reason are the two divinities of man; they are my God! . . . I frankly confess that I am an atheist.' Besides, the convention had ordered a total change in the calendar. Frenchmen dated from the era of the republic of 1792, or from the year One. The year commenced on the 22nd of September, 1792, the day of the first meeting of the convention, and was divided into twelve months\* of thirty days each, designated by magnificent names, borrowed from the seasons, (but which, unfortunately, only accorded with the climate of Paris.) The months were divided into decades of ten days. The five complementary days at the end of the year, were honoured with the name of *sans-culottides*, (days without breeches).

Can we be astonished that after such steps towards the suppression of everything which the Christian religion has sanctified, the Hébertists should propose the formal abolition of this religion?

Those that see the workings of systems, and a progression towards a determined object, in the frightful chaos of this period, pretend that the three parties into which the Mountain was now broken, represented the three different schools of philosophy of the seventeenth century. Robespierre's party were ardent admirers of Rousseau, and their ambition was to put

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\* These months commenced from the 22nd September, in the following order:—*Vendémiaire*, *Brumaire*, *Frimaire* for the autumn; *Nivose*, *Pluviose*, *Ventose*, for the winter; *Germinal*, *Floreal*, *Prarial*, for the spring; *Messidor*, *Thermidor*, *Fructidor*, for the summer. The days of the decades were merely distinguished as *Primidi*, *Duodi*, *Tridi*, &c.

into practice the moral and political ideas of this 'instructor of mankind.' Danton's party, with its indulgent impiety, its licentious tastes, its intellectual brilliancy, and its love of luxury, represented the school of Voltaire. The Hébertists were the disciples of the *Encyclopédie*.

Among the latter party, which had many adherents in the convention, was a Prussian baron, Anacharsis Clootz, who, calling himself the orator of the human race, had played a prominent part in the ridiculous scenes at the commencement of the revolution, in which the enthusiasm for liberty and fraternity had been expressed. This Anacharsis Clootz, who had progressed from fool to madman, and from madman to criminal, as almost all men who played an active part in the drama enacting in France, now took, together with Hébert, the initiative in the anti-religion question, which is represented as a *coup d'état*, calculated to place the commune, to which they belonged, at the head of the revolution\*. At the instigation of these two men, Gobel, bishop of Paris, with eleven of his vicars, presented himself before the convention, to renounce his functions as Minister of the Catholic Church; 'because,' said he, 'in future we ought to recognize no other public and national worship but that of liberty and equality.' (7th Nov., 1793.) The convention applauded those who had, as they expressed it, 'raised themselves to the height where the revolution and philosophy awaited them.' It was decreed, that thenceforward the worship of Reason should be the only national religion.

The metropolitan church was in consequence con-

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\* I cannot see in such measures as these, and many others of these times, anything but the freaks of the morbid imaginations of madmen, not the acting out of great projects, as the French Historians would make us believe. The French Revolution is the history of the human intellect having cast off its allegiance to God, and with that allegiance having lost all comprehension of virtue and its attendants, order and true liberty.

verted into *the Temple of Reason*, and a festival was there celebrated, in which this new goddess was throned in the place where before rose the altar of Christ. All the sections took part in this hideous ceremony, and the procession which followed the figure of Reason, represented under the form of a woman, and dragged along in an antique chariot, moved towards the convention, which received it with applause, and joined it. During a whole fortnight after this, the commune was engaged in works of piety, according to its new creed. It had the statues of the saints thrown down, and all relics burnt; it decreed the demolition of all church steeples, 'because it was contrary to the principles of equality that they should rise above all other edifices\*.' It farther decreed that all churches should be closed, and arranged processions of *sansculottes*, who paraded before the convention covered with the sacerdotal ornaments, parodied the ceremonies of the church, danced the *carmagnole*†, and bore in triumph the bust of Marat, the saint of the new creed. From all sides arrived at the same time the abjurations of the catholic priests, who declared themselves to have been, while in the service of the religion of Christ, charlatans and impostors. But let us hope that many of these abjurations were forged, or we may cease to feel any pity for the sufferings of a class, numbers of whose members had sunk into such depths of iniquity.

The fearful lengths to which things were now carried, could not but disgust and alarm those who had any feeling left, and even Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and their adherents, the very men who had fed the democratic passions, which were now working their worst, were horrified by the excesses they committed. After the fall of the Girondins, Danton, who was indolent except in moments of extreme excitement, had withdrawn in disgust, and even sorrow, to

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\* LAVALLÉE.

† A dance invented by the *sansculottes*.



Aras-sur-Aube, his birth-place, to try and forget, in the society of his young wife, the dreadful scenes that were dishonouring his country. His absence had been used by his adversaries, to render him unpopular, by spreading reports of his riches gained by illegitimate means, yet when he returned, and together with Camille Desmoulins, in the paper *Le Vieux Cordelier*, which they established for the purpose, preached moderation, and held up to universal execration Hébert and his infamous associates, and condemned the sanguinary laws of the committee, the popular sympathy with their opinions was shown by the great sale of their new paper. There were too many sufferers in France, that the slightest shade of a return to common humanity should not be hailed with enthusiasm. Whether or not these men had their personal motives for wishing to put an end to the present state of things, as their adversaries had for wishing it to continue, one is tempted to forget their former deeds, and to bless them for having pronounced, in the midst of the most frightful corruption, some words that did not dishonour humanity, and to have shed a ray of hope, though only transient, into the hearts of despairing multitudes.

The time had come, when 'the Revolution, like Saturn, was to devour its own children,' and the struggles between the three parties bear exactly the same character as all the struggles of the different factions throughout the Revolution, with the sole difference, that in this instance the party in power (*i. e.*, Robespierre and the committee) immolated the other two, before they were too powerful to be overcome. But the same accusations as ever were afloat. The foreign powers, but particularly the minister of England, was said to be the instigator of every conspiracy, real or pretended. It was he who incited the Hébertists to throw odium upon the Revolution by their abominable excesses, and it was he, on the other hand, who

inspired the Dantonists with their more moderate views. Robespierre, who presided almost as judge in the Jacobin club, the chief arena of the struggles between the two parties, particularly insisted upon throwing this odium of foreign interference upon the excesses of the Hébertists, in order to be able the more energetically to attack the new religion which they had introduced, and of which he, from policy as well as from conviction, highly disapproved. It was obnoxious to him, because its introduction was a victory gained by the commune over the committee, because he was afraid that the Revolution should appear atheistical, and because, as he expressed himself, '*Atheism is aristocratical*. The idea of a Great Being, who watches over oppressed innocence, and who punishes triumphant crime, is quite popular. The people, those that are unhappy, applaud me; if there be any who blame me for deprecating atheism, it is the rich and the guilty.'

In the same speech, however, he allowed, that though a legislator would be a madman, were he to adopt a system of atheism, and though he was of opinion, 'that if God did not exist, He ought to be invented,' he also maintained that those would be madmen who should consider it a crime in any individual to adopt whatever opinion he thought proper upon the subject. In consequence of the opinions held by Robespierre and the committee, backed by the Jacobins, who were their steadfast supporters, it was decreed that all religions, as well as the worship of Reason, were to be tolerated, and the Hébertists, losing their footing in the club, sought to get up agitations among the people, by taking advantage of the dreadful scarcity which continued to prevail. But their attempts at insurrection failed, and only provided new weapons against themselves. Their fall was rendered comparatively easy. On the 13th March, 1794, St. Just demanded of the convention that they should be summoned to the bar;

and again treating of their conduct, as if it were adopted upon the instigation of the enemies of the Revolution, declared that it was 'high time to immolate on the tomb of the tyrant, all those who regret tyranny, and that justice and probity should be the order of the day.' The convention, upon this, declared as traitors to the country, whoever had favoured in the republic, the plan of corrupting the citizens, of subverting the government, and of subduing the spirit of the public; whoever should excite uneasiness, with regard to provisions; whoever should afford a place of refuge to an emigrant, or attempt to change the form of government. Those accused of conspiracy were declared outlawed, and punishment of death was decreed against those who should shelter an outlaw. Hébert, Ronsin, Vincent, Cloutz, several chiefs of the revolutionary army, who had joined in their insurrections, and distinguished themselves by their atrocities, and a few strangers, who scarcely knew the Hébertists, but shared in their fate, in order to give a semblance of truth to the pretence of foreign intrigues, were condemned to death, and executed on the 24th March. The populace was not sated with the oft-repeated spectacle of the guillotine, and assembled in as great numbers to see the death struggle of these men, who for a long time had enjoyed the title of patriots, as they had done at all the preceding executions. Hébert met with no sympathy from the degraded mob, to whose degradation he had so greatly contributed; and, in their inhumanity to himself, saw the fruits of the vile lessons he had given them. This man, who had not trembled when committing deeds of the most atrocious cruelty and injustice, was so weak in face of death, that he fell from one swoon into another on his way to the guillotine.

The fall of this party occasioned the greatest sensation in France. It was the first time for five years that the government had been stronger than those who

conspired against it—that the Revolution, as it were, had stopped, and all parties hailed it with hope; all believed that a change of policy was to ensue. The royalists in the departments began to hold up their heads, the sufferers in the prisons thought already that they breathed the air of freedom, and the Dantonists believed themselves victorious, for, in the persons of Hébert and his associates, the committee had condemned the excesses against which they had raised their voice. But all were mistaken. The Hébertists had fallen, because their fall was deemed necessary by Robespierre and his party, and the Dantonists were to succumb to the same necessity. Their fall was to prove that the committee was still inflexible, and that it tolerated those only who went entirely with it. All divergence, from whatever side, was to be punished. Robespierre had indeed repeatedly raised his voice to defend Danton and Desmoulins, when they were attacked by the Hébertists, but his vanity could not brook the repeated and severe animadversions on the conduct of the committee, contained in *Le Vieux Cordelier*\*, and

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\* In one of the numbers of *Le Vieux Cordelier*, Camille Desmoulins described what had been done under the Roman emperors, and pretending to give merely a translation from Tacitus, made fearful allusion to the law against the suspected. ‘Anciently,’ said he, ‘there was at Rome, according to Tacitus, a law, specifying crimes against the state, and crimes of high treason (*lèse majesté*), which incurred capital punishment. These crimes of high treason, under the republic, were reduced to four kinds: if an army had been abandoned in an enemy’s country; if sedition were excited; if those intrusted with office had managed public affairs, or the public money, badly; if the majesty of the Roman people had been degraded. The emperors had only need of some additional articles to this law, to envelope citizens, and even whole cities, in proscription. Augustus was the first who extended this law of high treason, by comprehending in it writing, which he called counter-revolutionary. Soon there was no limit to the extension. As soon as words were become state crimes, there was only one step more to take, in order to change into crimes the most simple looks, sadness, compassion, sighs, even silence. . . . A man must show joy at the death of his friend and of his relation, if he did not wish to expose himself to death also.

‘Everything gave umbrage to the tyrant. Did a citizen acquire popularity? he was a rival to the prince, and might excite to civil war. *He was of the suspected.*

‘On the contrary, did he avoid popularity, and remain at his own

still less Camille Desmoulins' retort, when, with hypocritical moderation, he proposed in the Jacobin club, where Camille was called to an account for his expressions, to forgive the author, and only to burn his writings. 'To burn them is not to refute them!' exclaimed Desmoulins inconsiderately, and he was doomed\*.

fireside? This retired life had caused him to be remarked, had given to him consideration. *He was of the suspected.*

'Was he rich? There was imminent danger that the people would be corrupted by his largess. *He was of the suspected.*

'Was he poor? How then! Invincible emperor! there must be close surveillance over this man. No one is so enterprising as he who has nothing. *He was of the suspected.*

'Was he of a sombre melancholy character, or careless of his dress? Why was he afflicted? because public affairs went well. *He was of the suspected.*'

Camille Desmoulins thus continued a long enumeration of those who were suspected, and drew a horrible picture of what was passing in Paris, by seeming to show what had been done in Rome.

\* He continued to the last, fearlessly to expose the iniquity of those in power, and to show how valueless was a republic unless realizing the virtues of one.

'What would it signify to Pitt,' he exclaimed, 'that France were free, if liberty only served to carry us back to the ignorance of the ancient Gauls, to their *sagum*—their rude garments (*brayes*)—their mistletoe—and their houses, which were only huts of clay? Far from lamenting over this, it appears to me that Pitt would give many guineas that such liberty should be established among us. But what would render the English government furious would be, if it could be said of France what Dicaeus had said of Attica. In no part of the world can a man live more agreeably than in Athens, whether he has money or whether he has none. Those who have gained a competence by commerce, or by their industry, can procure for themselves all imaginable amusement; and as to those who seek to gain this power, there are many ways by which they may obtain sufficient to divert themselves at the *Anthesteria*, and save something besides, so that no one can complain of his poverty, without at the same time casting a reproach on himself for his idleness.

'I believe, then, that liberty does not exist in an equality of privations, and that the finest eulogium on the convention would be, if it could bear this testimony. I have found the nation without *culottes*, and I leave it *culottée*.'

In speaking still farther of the manners of the Athenians, Camille Desmoulins continues: 'Many of the comedies of Aristophanes were directed against the *ultra-revolutionists* of that time. This satire was most cutting; and if to-day any one of these pieces were translated, which were acted four hundred and thirty years before Christ, under the archon Sthenocles, Hébert would maintain that the work was the creation only of yesterday; the invention of Fabre d'Eglantine, against him and Ronsin; and that it was this translator, who was the cause of the famine. . . . However, I mistake when I say men are changed: they have always been the same; the liberty of speech has not been allowed more impunity in

Six days after the execution of the Hébertists, the Dantonists were arrested. The convention was stupefied, but Robespierre and St. Just gave it clearly to be understood that nothing was to be done but to follow their orders; the members tremblingly complied, and unanimously voted the decree of accusation against the deputies Danton, Desmoulins, Bazire, Philippeaux, and Lacroix, besides a number of others belonging to the same party. The accusations were of course always drawn up so as to represent the accused as traitors and conspirators, but Danton who had so often launched these accusations against others, did not himself submit tamely to such a procedure. Before his arrest he had been so sure of his own popularity, that he had rejected every proposal of timely flight, and now that he was brought before the tribunal, where none as yet had been acquitted, he expressed his indignation with such violence, calling upon his accusers to come and meet him face to face, that St. Just and Billaud Varennes, ordered the public accuser, Fouquier Tinville, not to reply to these demands, but to get through the three days allowed for the pleading of the accused, as he best could, by delays and other subterfuges, and then to close the debates. However, the people began to manifest some sympathy with the man who had so often commanded them, and the committee having obtained some vague information of words spoken by General Dillon, who was imprisoned in the Luxembourg, which seemed to imply that a plot was on foot among the prisoners for making an effort to free themselves; St. Just, taking advantage of this rumour, went to the convention to report that the prisoners were in open revolt against the tribunal, and that a conspiracy was ready to break out both within and without the prison walls. The convention, the

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the ancient than in the modern republics. Socrates, accused of having spoken ill of the gods, drank hemlock: Cicero, for having attacked Antony, was sent into banishment.'

humble slave of the committee, did as they desired, and authorized the tribunal to stop the pleading of the prisoners, and to decide immediately upon their fate. Armed with this decree, Fouquier pronounced without delay, the sentence of death, and the accused, fifteen in number, were conducted to the scaffold on the 5th April, 1794. A few days after, they were followed by the rest of the two parties, condemned on the pretext of the conspiracy of the prisoners, among whom were Chaumette, Gobel, and the widows of Hébert and Desmoulins.

The last resistance was overcome; no voice was any longer raised against the reign of terror; from all parts of France came felicitations to the committee, which reigned without a rival, and with more unlimited power than was possessed by any monarch that ever ruled. While the struggles were going on with the Hébertists and the Dantonists, the committee desiring still farther to concentrate all power in the state, made the convention pass a decree, which may be considered as the final settlement of the revolutionary government (4th December, 1793). All established administrative bodies, and all public functionaries without exception, were placed under the immediate direction of the committee of public safety. The application of the *revolutionary laws*\* was confided to the revolutionary committees, which were to correspond directly with the committees of public safety (*salut public*), and of general safety (*sureté générale*). The *procureur syndics* of the departments and of the communes, were replaced by *national agents*, who were chosen by the government, not by the localities, and the representatives sent on divers missions, who had hitherto exercised almost discretionary powers, were forbid, as well as the local authorities, to extend or to limit any decrees, or to levy troops or money, &c. Besides this the *Bulletin*

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\* Nothing seemed too discordant for those men to blend: *Revolutionary Laws!!!*

*des Lois* was created, an arrangement for ensuring the promulgation of the laws issued, for which there had not until then been any distinct regulations.

In the report which Robespierre had made concerning these measures, and which was at the same time a manifesto against the two refractory parties, he defined the policy, which he and his colleagues intended to follow. 'The first maxim of our policy,' he said, 'must be, that the people must be governed by reason, and the enemies of the people by terror. Though virtue is the prime mover of a popular government in times of peace, during a revolution it must be moved by two springs, virtue and terror. Terror means nothing more than prompt, severe, and inflexible justice: and is thus an emanation of virtue. To punish the oppressors of humanity, is clemency; to pardon them, is barbarity\*.'

True to their word, the committee acted upon the principle, that terror is a virtue, and terror continued to be the order of the day, and new rivers of blood were added to those that had already flowed; for notwithstanding the success which had attended the French arms since the commencement of the year 1794, there were yet innumerable difficulties in the interior, and all difficulties were to be drowned in blood.

France had indeed made unequalled efforts. The *levy en masse* had by this time added twelve hundred thousand men to the armies; the gun manufactories had produced one million of fire-arms; the cannon foundries were able to deliver seven thousand cannons a year, and twelve millions of pounds of saltpetre had been extracted from the soil; and the navy, completely ruined by the emigration, had been recruited by tyrannous means. But the inexperienced peasants, who were thus pressed into the service, could not stand the attacks of the first navy in the world, and England was

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\* Is it this and similar plausible speeches that have blinded those who attribute all the crimes of these men to the dangers which surrounded the country?



constantly victorious at sea, while the allied armies were beaten on all sides. No enemy any longer trod the soil of France; the French had again entered Belgium, and the armies of the Alps and the Pyrenees had, by a series of brilliant victories, opened to them Italy and Spain.

In the interior all kinds of suffering continued to increase. The assignats were more and more depreciated, and with fourteen different armies to maintain, the necessity for issuing new ones, continued to be the same; the number of those already in circulation amounted to four or five milliards of francs. The requisites for the armies had been levied in so tyrannical and confused a manner, that all merchandize of the first necessity had almost disappeared from the market, and production had nearly ceased. No other industry and commerce existed in the country, but what was required to provide for the armies and for the daily subsistence of the people. The *maximum*, though continued, was of course not sufficient to counterbalance the evils of the existing scarcity, and notwithstanding the minute and multifarious measures for ensuring the working of this law, it was almost openly eluded by the buyers and sellers, who had two kinds of merchandize, the one good, which they sold to those who were capable and willing to pay above the *maximum*, and the other bad, which was sold to the people for the fixed price.

In consequence of the arrival of a supply from America, and of a very good harvest, the quantity of corn was considered sufficient for the year, yet the committee had taken very vigorous measures to prevent confusion. The commission of subsistence was ordered to verify the state of the crops, and to see that sufficient corn was immediately threshed, to meet the demands in the market. It had been feared that the reapers would exact too high wages, and the committee had in consequence declared that all persons,

accustomed to this kind of work were in *forced requisition* (*réquisition forcée*), and that the amount of their wages should be fixed by the local authorities. Afterwards, when the journeymen butchers and bakers had mutinied, the same law was extended to all workmen in the state, employed in the production, the transport, or the sale of the first necessities. The provisioning with meat, caused the greatest anxiety. This article was particularly scarce at Paris, and from the time that the Hébertists had availed themselves of its scarcity to get up riots, the evil had continued to increase. The same regulations which had been made for the consumption of bread, were obliged to be adopted for meat also. The inhabitants of Paris were put upon rations of meat, as before of bread. The number of cattle, sheep, and swine, allowed for the consumption of every day, was fixed by the commission, which distributed them to the butchers named by every section, according to the number of persons for whom they had to provide. Every butcher was to deliver, every fifth day, half a pound of meat per head, to each family who applied to him with cards signed by the revolutionary committees, and bearing the number of members of which the family consisted.

The same extraordinary measures were soon found necessary for wood and coal also, and proving inefficacious, every day gave rise to new oppressive enactments, and to a state of suffering which is perhaps unequalled in the annals of the world. Anarchy, however, had ceased to reign, for the committee, now sufficiently powerful, bent all other wills to its own. The different ministerial departments were suppressed, and replaced by twelve commissions, which were in fact but the offices of the committee. The revolutionary army, which had ceased to be necessary, as no resistance was any longer attempted against the decrees of the committee, and which had proved, by the part it had taken in the plots of the Hébertists, that it was

likely to become a nuisance to its own masters, was dissolved. The revolutionary committees in the communes, with the exception of those at Paris, were suppressed, as it was found that the police would be more active, if its functions were entrusted to fewer hands. All the clubs, except the Jacobins, being also found very detrimental, now that the object was to prevent discussion, not to encourage it, were accused of being composed of enemies of the revolution, and suppressed.

The Jacobins then became more than ever the regulators of opinions; but the general censorship which they had hitherto exercised, having become rather annoying, as it happened sometimes that they denounced those whom it was not convenient to punish, it was determined that, in future, denunciations should be transmitted secretly to the committee of public safety, by a committee of its members instituted for the purpose. Finally, a decree was passed, according to which all the ex-nobles of France, and all foreigners, were bound to leave the country within ten days, under penalty of death. And meanwhile the guillotine continued unrelentlessly the extermination of those called the enemies of the republic. At Nantes, Carrier continued his sanguinary occupation; at Orange a new revolutionary tribunal was erected, which on internal evidence alone, or what they chose to call such, judged the suspected of the south. The deputy Maignet, who presided in this tribunal, destroyed, together with all its inhabitants, the little town of Bedouin, which was suspected of an intention to revolt. At Arras, Joseph Lebon imitated and surpassed all the atrocities of Carrier, and at Paris, the tribunal condemned whole *batches*, as they were termed, of individuals, without even going to the trouble of putting questions to them. Hypocrisy of forms which had hitherto been kept up, was now laid aside, but hypocrisy of expression was still maintained, and Robespierre and St. Just overflowed with speeches, in which the words justice,

morality, and virtue, were continually repeated. 'We have opposed the sword to the sword,' said St. Just, 'and the republic is founded.' . . . 'Honesty, justice, and all the virtues, are the order of the day,' proclaimed Robespierre, and nothing was now left for those who had *decreed* morality, but to do the same for religion. The triumvirate, Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon, having now ensured their reign; according to the natural order of things, the destroyers next thought of reconstructing. They are said to have given themselves up to fond imaginations of instructing, purifying, and moralizing the multitude, and they maintained that whatever is done for the people, or spoken for the people, all is virtue and truth; there can be no error, no excess, no crime\*. 'The suffering classes,' said Robespierre, 'are the powerful of the earth, they have a right to speak as masters to the governments that neglect them. We will have an order of things in which all low and evil passions shall be restrained, all benevolent and generous passions awakened by the laws, in which the common fatherland shall ensure the well-being of every individual, and in which every individual shall take part in the prosperity of his country. . . . We will substitute morality for egoism, contempt of vice for contempt of poverty, love of glory for love of money,' and to realize these day-dreams of these cold-hearted villains, dripping with human gore, deafened by the cries of misery which they had occasioned, the religion of Christ was too slow; they must have one of their own making, 'the dogmas of which should be sentiments of social union.'

Now that power was concentrated, the hatred of those who were oppressed by it, and the envy of those who wished to share in it, also began to find objects on which to fix. The committee of general safety had instituted a police, which, besides the open violence which it employed, had its secret agents in every

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\* GARAT.

assembly, in every public place, and in every private house; and which, preventing by fear every outburst of feeling, only rendered it the more intense. The desire of ridding the country of the monsters, who were every day sacrificing hundreds of their fellow citizens, began to rise; and though a corrupt people lay crouching at the feet of the vile tyrants, who by flattering its passions, had enslaved it, one individual raised his arm to strike what he thought a virtuous blow. A man called Ladmiral, had long hesitated who to destroy, Robespierre or Collot d'Herbois; he at length decided upon the latter, but failed, and his failure contributed still farther to strengthen the power of those he had threatened. The most extraordinary sympathy was shown for the members of the committee thus menaced, and was even pushed so far, as to offer the committee the insignia of sovereign power. This offer was, however, rejected in most magniloquent speeches, by those who knew that they had every thing to lose by it, and nothing to gain. Robespierre particularly, who felt the danger with which he was threatened by the growing importance attached to his person, most warmly repelled honours which should raise him above his fellow citizens. He knew that the power he enjoyed, he owed to the support of his party, and his own mean and envious heart taught him, that to rise too high above this party, would be to convert friends into foes. This had indeed already in a great measure taken place, for it had become usual to say, *Robespierre will have it so*, not, *The committee will have it so*; and Fouquier Tinville, the chief of the revolutionary tribunal, used his name alone to menace his victims, while the prisoners also singled his name out for execration. Robespierre was also the idol of the women, who spoke of him as of a being above humanity, and whose delicate flatteries and attentions were most pleasing to this strange being, who was little in every thing but crime, and who owed to this very littleness, the influence he now possessed.

To the rest of Robespierre's adorers, was joined a ridiculous sect, headed by an old woman named Catherine Th  ot, who called herself the mother of God, and predicted the coming of a new Messiah, and had even indicated Robespierre as this prophet. But notwithstanding the ridicule with which these circumstances covered Robespierre, in the eyes of a people, who, even in the midst of the atrocious scenes which were going on, had not lost their taste for wit and satire, they did not fail to give umbrage to his colleagues, who suspected, that notwithstanding his mock humility, he was not altogether guiltless of the homage which was rendered him; and this suspicion was greatly strengthened at the sight of the prominent part he had assigned to himself at the inauguration of the new creed which he and his colleagues had bestowed upon France.

This creed, which was termed the universal religion of nature, was now to be seriously introduced; and the convention had voted f  tes in honour of *liberty, justice*, and *the human race*, and had decreed, 'That the French people recognised the existence of a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul.' (May 7th, 1794.)

The 8th of June was the day appointed for the festival. A few days before, the convention having to elect a president, Robespierre was appointed by his colleagues, who as yet thought it advisable to flatter him. This choice ensured to him the principal *r  le* in the spectacle of the 8th. The morning rose in all the glory of the season. Robespierre, after having allowed expectation to watch long for his coming, at length appeared in the midst of the convention. It was evident that great attention had been bestowed upon his dress; his head was decked with feathers, and he, as well as every other member of the convention, carried in his hand a bouquet of flowers, fruits, and ears of corn. His countenance, usually dark and lowering, on this day bore an expression of joy and triumph.

The procession moved towards an amphitheatre raised in the middle of the garden of the Tuileries, on which the convention took its seat, surrounded by groups of persons of both sexes, and of all ages. The children were crowned with violets, the youths with myrtle, the men with oak leaves, and the old men with vine and olive wreaths. The matrons held their daughters by the hand, and carried baskets full of flowers. In front of the amphitheatre were placed three figures, representing Atheism, Discord and Egoism. As soon as the members of the convention were seated, the ceremony was opened by the performance of music, then the president made a speech, commencing in these words:—‘Republican Frenchmen, the fortunate day has at length arrived, which the French people consecrates to the Supreme Being! Never has the world which He has created offered to Him a spectacle so worthy of Him. He has seen tyranny, crime, and imposture, reign upon the earth: at this moment He sees an entire nation, that has been wrestling with all the oppressors of the human race, suspending its heroic labour, in order to raise its thoughts and its prayers to the Great Being, who intrusted it with this mission, and gave courage to fulfil it!’ After a few more words, the president seizing a torch put fire to the images of Atheism, Discord, and Egoism; and when they were burnt, the statue of Wisdom\* was seen rising from their ashes. The procession then moved to the Champ de Mars, where the members of the convention seated themselves in the shade of a tree on the summit of a hill, while the other actors in the scene again grouped themselves around it, and, after another symphony had been performed, the young men, on a given signal, drew their swords from the scabbard, and swore to defend their country; the women, taking their children in their arms, raised them towards heaven; and all the

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\* It was remarked that the image of Wisdom had suffered considerably from the smoke, and was rather dusky in appearance.

spectators followed their example. The day was terminated by public games. Robespierre, intoxicated with the delight of having acted as high priest on this solemn occasion, was not left to enjoy in peace his dreams of greatness. His colleagues who had watched him with jealous eyes, and marked the growing pride of his deportment, whispered into his ear—one, *that there were still Brutuses alive*; another, *that the Tarpeian rock was near the capitol*.

The next day the envy which he had excited already began to be manifested in direct attacks. Billaud-Varennes and Collot d'Herbois, who trembled at the thought of order being re-established, accused him of making the Revolution retrograde, by introducing anew ideas of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. The high priest of the preceding day could find no better means of proving his innocence than quoting a law which he and Couthon had just been writing, and which tended to render the revolutionary tribunal still more sanguinary, and more uncontrolled. Every vestige of even the semblance of justice which had hitherto been kept up, was destroyed by this law, which authorized the tribunal to put to death any prisoners 'against whom could be produced any kind of proof, either material or moral, verbal or written, which could be approved of by reasonable minds.' The only guarantee of the accused were thus in the conscience of the jury, men permanently attached to the tribunal, who can scarcely be supposed to have had a conscience. But this law was so styled as to give to the public accuser, and to the two committees, the right which had hitherto been exclusively enjoyed by the convention, of summoning the enemies of the people to appear before the tribunal; and its members were thus placed at the mercy of their enemies, as all other citizens had long been. Robespierre was too well known to allow a doubt as to this wording of the decree\*

\* This decree is designated *The law of 22nd Prairial* (10th June).



being intentional; and though no voice was raised to protest in the name of humanity against this iniquitous law, the danger to their own persons roused the members of the convention from their degenerate slumbers, and after some days of stormy discussions, the astute plan of Robespierre was baffled by the insertion of a clause, declaring that the convention alone had the right to arrest its own members: all other persons were left at the mercy of this most wicked law. Robespierre, indignant, protested that he entertained no projects against the convention, and as usual enumerated his services, and alluded to the innumerable dangers by which he pretended he was always surrounded; but the struggle which was to end in his fall had begun, and those who had hitherto been the most abject in their submission to the triumvirate, were now the most clamorous against them. Tallien, Barras, Bourdon, were in the foremost ranks of those who tried to raise a party against him in the convention; and they were joined by the members of the committee of general safety (*sureté générale*), the friends of Billaud-Varennes, and ancient accomplices of Hébert,—men who had been used to stand at the foot of the scaffold, and laugh at the work of butchery going on,—men who had been used to say, that they would not rest until they had raised a wall of heads between themselves and the people,—men whose lives were spent in vile debauch, and who were no better than common thieves, but who, nevertheless, ranked among the great and powerful of this republic. In spite of Robespierre's resistance, the fanatics who had elected him their prophet were summoned before the revolutionary tribunal, and he himself covered with ridicule. Weeping with rage and wounded vanity, he retired from the committee, and for six weeks took no part in public business; during which time he left in the hands of his colleagues the power of exercising the dictatorship acquired by the law of the 22nd Prairial,

a power of which they availed themselves in the most atrocious way, while he, being the author of the law, of course bore all the odium of their crimes. Besides, though absent from public life, he did not break off his relations with the infamous chiefs of the tribunal, Dumas, Coffinal, and Fouquier, and thus took a more direct part also in the murders. Blood was shed with more reckless, guilty haste than ever. The prisons were thinning so fast, that Fouquier, with ferocious pleasantry, said that they should soon have to stick up a bill with *house to be let*. Yet even the pretexts under which these murders were at first committed, had ceased to exist. The republic was victorious, its enemies in the interior completely subdued, but *the habit of murder had been contracted*; all respect for human life was gone, and the daily executions had even ceased to cause excitement. The horrid monster Fouquier Tinville, to bring variety into the monotony of his business, had constructed, in one of the halls of the palace of the Luxembourg converted into a prison, an amphitheatre capable of containing about one hundred and fifty accused, whom he proposed to have all condemned at one sitting; he had had the guillotine put up in the same hall. But the committee of public safety hearing of this enormity, sent for their atrocious instrument to remonstrate with him, and Collot d'Herbois exclaimed in a transport of passion, 'Would you degrade punishment?' (*Veux tu demoraliser le supplice?\**) Fouquier was more moderate in future, but he continued, nevertheless, to exercise his functions to his own satisfaction. 'Things go well,' said this miscreant, 'the heads fall as thick as tiles; however, in the next decade, a greater number must fall: I must have four hundred and fifty at least†.' The most criminal negligence existed in his most iniquitous tribunal. Often the acts of accusation were not given

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\* THIERS.

† For this and all the other details, see the trial of Fouquier.

to the accused before the moment that they appeared at the bar. Acts of accusation were prepared in readiness, in which crimes and all particulars were enumerated, and to which the names alone were wanting. It was the same with the judgments. The printing-office was in the adjoining room, and the papers were handed to the printer through a small aperture in the wall. As it has been already stated, the most extraordinary mistakes were made—one person was put to death instead of another; persons long dead, were again upon the lists of the condemned. One man appeared before the tribunal, whose name was not upon the list of accused. He observed this to Fouquier. ‘Never mind,’ replied the monster, ‘give me your name.’ He did so, and was sent to the guillotine. The list of those who were executed, was every day hawked about under the windows of the prisoners—of those who had perhaps lost the last tie that bound them to earth—in words which proved the degree of brutishness to which the people had sunk. ‘Here are the names of those who have won in the lottery of the St. Guillotine,’ was the usual phrase\*. But let us turn away from scenes at which the heart sickens, and which it would fain refuse to believe, but which are, alas! but too well authenticated.

Such a horrid system could not continue much longer. The frightful indifference which had succeeded to the no less frightful excitement of the people, was destined to cease with the growing struggles between the triumvirs and their assailants; a slight ray of hope only was wanted to dissolve the ice that had settled round all hearts.

During his retirement from the committee, Robespierre did not neglect his staunch friends the Jacobins, and though apparently inert, his speeches there show that he had neither forgotten the dangers that threatened

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\* THIERS.

him, nor the end he had marked out for himself. He spoke of stopping the effusion of human blood which was being shed for crimes; he complained of being rendered odious to the people, by calumniators who put upon him all the massacres that were committed, but he nevertheless gathered together all his adherents, and prepared to strike a bold stroke, to have recourse to the scaffold and to the sword, in case his eloquence should not suffice to crush his opponents. He appeared again in the convention on the 26th July (8th Thermidor), armed with a voluminous speech which he had carefully prepared; but his enemies had been active in his absence, and the assembly was no longer inclined to lend a favourable ear to a defence which consisted mostly in recriminations against its own members. He was listened to in dead silence, a portentous silence to one who was accustomed to have his voice drowned by applause. When he had finished, the first who ventured to speak, Bourdon, only did so to propose that the speech should be sent to the two committees. At length Cambon exclaimed: 'It is time to speak the whole truth; one man has paralyzed the will of the whole convention, and that man is the one who has just spoken—is Robespierre.' The ice once broken, a torrent of accusations rushed out against Robespierre, and the members vied with each other in taking the defence of those whom he had accused. Robespierre, disconcerted, withdrew, but though he had been made to feel how little power his words now had, he still relied upon success the next day. His friends the Jacobins, to whom he resorted after his defeat in the convention, more quick to action, declared that an insurrection ought to be got up immediately, but Robespierre was not framed for open and daring crime, he had more than once proved himself physically a coward, and he restrained the impetuosity of his friends, among whom, besides the Jacobins, were the mayor Fleuriot Lescot, who had succeeded Pache, the national agent Payan,

who had succeeded Chaumette, and the commandant of the sections, Henriot. Upon the fidelity of the members of the revolutionary tribunal, who were entirely his creatures, he could also depend, as well as upon the men of the Fauxbourg, who still looked up to him as the genius of the Revolution.

It was decided that St. Just, who had been recalled from the army, to come to the aid of his friend, should recommence the attack in the convention the next day, and that the commune should hold itself in readiness for an insurrection in case of failure.

In the mean time, Tallien, Bourdon, Barras, Fréron, and the other Mountainists, exerted their utmost endeavours to gain the rest of the convention for their cause, and at last succeeded.

On the 9th Thermidor (27th July, 1794), St. Just ascended the tribune, but had hardly begun to speak before the storm broke loose. Tallien and Billaud Varennes were the first to interrupt him, and the latter pronounced a number of vague\* accusations against Robespierre, and ended by saying that the Jacobins had on the preceding day entered into a conspiracy for murdering the convention. At these words Robespierre rushed to the tribune, but from all sides resounded the cry: 'Down with the tyrant!' with such violence, that it was impossible for him to make himself heard, and Tallien brandishing a poniard, cried out: 'I witnessed yesterday the sitting of the Jacobins; I saw the army of the new Cromwell forming itself, and I have armed myself with a poniard, that I may pierce his heart, in case the convention has not the courage to issue a decree of accusation against him.' The convention then decreed the permanence of its sittings, (a measure always taken in times of danger,) and the arrest of Dumas, Henriot, and other creatures of Robespierre; it was decided that the commune of Paris should

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\* It was difficult for these men to accuse each other, such intimate relationship there was between their crimes.

be responsible, on its life, for the tranquillity of the capital, and a proclamation was issued to the people. During this time Robespierre made innumerable efforts to gain a hearing, but in vain; his voice was always drowned by the clamours of the assembly, and the bell of the president ringing to order. Tallien recommenced his accusations. 'It is false!' cried Robespierre, and he was again interrupted. For one moment he fixed his eyes upon the most ardent members of the Mountain, who had so long been his supporters and coadjutors, but some returned his look coldly, others turned away their heads. Then addressing the assembly in general, he cried: 'It is to you, honest men, that I address myself, not to the brigands.' The vociferations were redoubled; in endeavouring to overpower them, his voice failed, and trembling with rage, it was with the greatest effort that he screamed out: 'President of assassins, I demand to be heard!' 'The blood of Danton chokes him,' cried one of the deputies in reply, and in the midst of the most dreadful tumult, the decree for his arrest was passed. The deputy Souchet then declared, that in giving his voice, he thought he was voting for the arrest of the triumvirate, and the convention, willing to assent, included in the decree Couthon and St. Just, who cool and impassible, had been witnesses of the scene. The younger Robespierre, who had been mostly engaged with the armies, but had latterly been retained in Paris to strengthen his brother's party, asked to share his fate, as well as Lebas. The assembly consented, and the prisoners were distributed in different prisons, and the convention suspended its sitting for two hours.

In the meanwhile Robespierre's friends were not idle. Immediately on hearing of his arrest, the general council of the commune declared itself in insurrection, and the sections, the Jacobins, and the revolutionary committees, were all in movement. Again the tocsin sounded, the barriers were closed, and Paris was in

open insurrection. The prisoners were soon released, and carried in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville. But their triumph was merely owing to the two hours' rest which the convention had imprudently allowed itself. As soon as it had again assembled, some of the deputies, by their intrepidity, immediately succeeded in turning away the more immediate danger which threatened the assembly, from the cannon which Coffinal had already pointed against it; the cannoneers having been brought back to obedience, were made to turn their artillery against the Hôtel de Ville, where the assembled insurgents had lost time in deliberating. Henriot was drunk and incapable of leading on the sections, and Robespierre still recoiled before the idea of an insurrection. In the convention there was no hesitation; the Hôtel de Ville was soon surrounded, and Leonard Bourdon entered the hall where the escaped prisoners were assembled, at the head of a few armed men. On seeing that hope was lost, Lebas immediately put an end to his own life by a pistol-shot; Robespierre attempted the same, but did not succeed. His under-jaw only was fractured by the ball; the younger Robespierre threw himself from the window, Couthon and St. Just remained fixed to the spot, and Robespierre, bathed in his own blood, was transported in this state to the committee of general safety, where he remained for several hours extended on a table, exposed to the outrages of his former colleagues, who were base enough to strike him, now that he was fallen and helpless, to cover him with invectives, and even to spit in his face! These are moments of most sublime elevation of soul in those who fall innocently and in a good cause, but what must have been the feelings of this unhappy man, while he lay thus helplessly exposed to the brutal insults of those who had been his associates through a long career of crime. If Robespierre is judged by his *words*, he must be pronounced to have been a mistaken but enthusiastic Utopist; if judged by his *acts* in connexion

with his words, he appears as the greatest monster of hypocrisy the world has ever produced\*. One virtue he possessed, he was honest in money matters; he did not pilfer; while all other so-called patriots and philanthropists enriched themselves at the expense of those suffering classes, to whom they pretended their life was devoted; and the extraordinary renown he gained for this simple virtue, proves, more than anything else, how low was the state of morality in France at that day. The day after their arrest, the prisoners, together with sixteen members of the commune, suffered their punishment; and the cries of joy which accompanied them to the scaffold, the great excitement which had succeeded the general apathy which had reigned of late, on such occasions, proved that the people, sated with blood, began to return to humanity, but that its feelings of justice were yet tinged with the ferocity of the times.

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\* Napoleon at St. Helena pronounced a kind of apology of Robespierre. It is a question though whether Napoleon is a good authority as to the moral character of a man.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

Consequences of Robespierre's fall—Reign of Terror over—*La Jeunesse Dorée*—Surpassing frivolity—Attempted suppression of the Jacobins—Measures against the former instruments of Terror—Universal guilt—Destruction of the Jacobin Club—Decrees of the Convention—Misery of the people—Operations of the army—Movements in La Vendée—War of the Chouans—Peace at length established in La Vendée—Advantageous peace with Holland—Peace with Prussia—Negotiations with Spain—Death of the Dauphin—Liberation of the Princess Royal—Peace concluded with all countries except England and Austria—Interior commotions—President's speech—Insurrection—Collot, Billaud, and Barrère ordered to be transported—Arrest of other Mountainists—Decrees of the Convention—Dreadful reaction—Insurrection—Temporary triumph of the mob—Soon forced into submission—Rallying of the Royalists—Treason of Pichegru—Defeat of the Royalists—New Constitution—Dissensions—Total discomfiture of the Insurgents—Convention confirms the Constitution and dissolves itself—The Directory—A regular Government established.

ROBESPIERRE'S fall was the signal for the cessation of the reign of terror; yet it was for a short time doubtful whether this would be the case, as many of those who had caused his fall, had done so more from a fear of his power, than from disapprobation of his system. But the people in general considered his death the end of the atrocious tyranny which had so long weighed upon them, and so energetically expressed this view, that the convention was obliged to act up to it, and the reaction was so great, that in a short time the whole revolutionary government was almost entirely destroyed. The extreme concentration of power, was followed by as great a dissemination. The divers affairs of the state were divided among sixteen committees, entirely independent of each other, and without a central point of union. The committee of public safety, formerly so powerful, was recomposed, and had no other functions assigned to it than the direction of military and diplomatic affairs. The law of

22nd Prairial was abolished; the number and power of the revolutionary committees were reduced; the commune of Paris was dissolved, and the administration of this city was entrusted to two commissions, of police and of finance, named by the convention, and controlled by the committees; the sections were forbid to assemble more than once in every decade, and the citizens who attended were no more paid. This was a most important step, for putting a stop to popular excitement, and sending back to their work, those who had been led by the factions to abandon their peaceful employments for political meetings, in which they were only made the tools of the designing men who tyrannized over them. The convention besides modified the law of the maximum, and limited the forced contributions; sent into the departments commissaries to purify the administrative bodies, to restrain the terrorists, and to deliver the suspected. The representatives who were devastating La Vendée were recalled, and an amnesty offered to the insurgents. A commission was named to inquire into the state of the prisons of Paris, who executed their task with so much clemency, that these receptacles of human misery were soon entirely vacated.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks rose from the land of France to the throne of the Almighty; but a country so long agitated by innumerable factions, had still many awful scenes to go through. Revenge was preparing to take the place of systematic murder. Girondins, Feuillants, and Royalists, began to raise their heads, and call for vengeance. The press having escaped from the thralldom in which it had been held by fear, more than by actual laws, excited the young men of Paris to revenge upon the murderers, the sufferings of the murdered. The appeal was replied to by the corrupted youths of the times, who had escaped from being pressed into the service of the armies, or had deserted that service, and who spent their lives in idle

pleasures and degrading debauches, sighing for another state of things, not from any elevated motives, but from a desire of extending the pleasures of their existence. These young men, who, in the language of the times, were denominated *muscadins*, or *la jeunesse dorée* (the gilded youth), had adopted an absurd costume, which they called *à la victime*, and armed with large sticks, used to repair to the Palais Royal and to the theatres to do battle with the Jacobins, and all the other agents of the reign of terror with whom they could meet; and then returned to sport their laurels in the salons which were beginning to be again opened, and where the ladies of Paris, not rendered serious even by the frightful scenes from which they had just escaped, exercised their imaginations, and showed their sensibility, by inventing names for the new fashions that appeared. There were caps *à l'humanité*, corsets *à la justice*, curtsies *à la victime*, and balls denominated *des victimes*, at which only those were admitted whose relatives had perished on the scaffold. Yet these women, in all their frivolity, were not heartless, for Madame Beauharnais\* and Madame Tallien† were among them; but a kind of moral intoxication had taken possession of society, relieved from the dreadful oppression which had weighed upon it: the licentious principles put forward before the Revolution, and but too greatly promoted by the laws of the republic, had made a fearful ravage in morals. The society of these times might have vied with that of the Regency in dissoluteness.

The party who had adhered to Robespierre, as long as

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\* Afterwards married to Napoleon Buonaparte, and Empress of the French; and one who used her high position to relieve as much suffering as she could.

† Madame Tallien was first married to an ancient president of the parliament of Bordeaux; she was arrested in 1793 as suspected, and released by Tallien, over whom, by her beauty and her talents, she exercised a most beneficial influence, and won him back to humanity. She was again imprisoned by Robespierre, and then excited Tallien to overthrow the tyrant.

his ambition did not threaten to number them among his victims, and who, in overthrowing him, had not meant to destroy his system, soon began to murmur against the reaction, and to denounce it as dangerous to the country. These men had been excluded from all the government departments, and, hated and distrusted in the convention as accomplices of the tyrant, they had now but one means of power left them, and that was the Jacobin club. This club, which had long been the centre of power, and the support of the ruling men, now changed its character, and became the centre of opposition to the government. Its destruction was in consequence determined by the Thermidorian party, and the work was commenced by a decree of the convention, forbidding all affiliations, and confederations, as well as all correspondence between popular societies under a collective name; even forbidding petitions to be presented under a collective name, and ordering them to be signed by all the individuals interested in them. These measures, which were in fact the annihilation of all the powers who had made the revolution, were most violently combated by those in whose minds these powers were intimately connected with the idea of liberty, while the majority of the nation, disgusted with anarchy, and longing for peace and tranquillity, hailed them with delight, and the reaction gained new force. The convention, as if anxious to make amends for the time in which it had, by its abject submission, allowed itself to be the instrument of the most cruel despotism and persecution, now, in accordance with the public desire, began to take prompt measures against the worst instruments of the reign of terror. Fouquier Tinville, Joseph Lebon, and David, were arrested. It was determined that the conduct of Billaud Varennes, Collot d'Herbois, and Barrère, should be examined into; and that the revolutionary tribunal of Nantes, together with its atrocious director, Carrier, should be judged by the tribunals.

Carrier's trial produced the greatest sensation, and in the most frightful manner brought home to every mind, how implicated the whole nation was in the guilt of this and other conspicuous monsters of the times; for the commissioners, the more immediate executors of the crimes, could throw their responsibility on the committees, the committees on the convention, and the convention on the people. 'Every one is guilty,' pleaded Carrier, in his own defence, 'every one is guilty, even to the president's bell.' Nevertheless he was condemned to death (25th Dec. 1794), with two of his accomplices, and never did the executioner's axe rid the world of a greater monster.

The Mountainists regarded his death as the commencement of reprisals against those men who, according to them, had saved France; and the Jacobins in particular made violent demonstrations, which led to their entire destruction. The *Jeunesse dorée*, who had long persecuted them, now besieged them in their own club-house, assailing them with large stones and sticks, and a most violent battle ensued, in which the women, who always crowded the galleries of the assembly room of the Jacobins, and were denominated by their adversaries *furies de guillotine*, again took a prominent part. The authorities at last interfered, and the club of the Jacobins was closed (24th January, 1795.)

Addresses pouring in from all sides, from the capital as well as from the departments, proved to the convention the popularity of this measure, and seventy-three of its proscribed members were now recalled, and gave new strength to the party of the reaction, which now proclaimed liberty to all religious creeds, declaring at the same time that 'it would not salary any,' and prohibiting all external signs of worship. The convention also re-established the free circulation of specie, and entirely abolished the *maximum* and the forced contributions. It further passed decrees with

a view to re-awaken the love of labour, to forward public instruction, and to encourage the cultivation of the arts and sciences; it established manufactures, projected new canals and new roads, and favoured agriculture. All these preparations for peace and prosperity seemed to disseminate a belief in their actual existence, at least among the higher and more wealthy classes, where pleasure, which had for centuries almost been the great aim of the Parisians, began to re-assert its empire. But among the lower classes, hunger and want still continued, and to all their other sufferings was added the severity of a winter almost unequalled in France, and during which there was no possibility for the poor to procure fuel, for all work was at a stand, and the little employment that they could get was paid in assignats, which could now not even procure for them the miserable pittance which they obtained for them before the abolition of the *maximum*. Urged on by despair, large bands of starving citizens presented themselves before the convention, declaring that they regretted the sacrifices they had made for the revolution, and threatening to revolt. The government had neither the power nor the means to alleviate their sufferings, and could only again have recourse to the fixing of the quantity of all the necessaries of life to be sold daily to each individual; a measure which was eluded by the rich, and only served to increase the misery of the poor.

In the meanwhile the army, far from participating in the feelings of the people at Robespierre's fall, was concerned at the reaction to which it had given rise, and seeing the weakness which ensued from the renewed struggles of the factions in the interior, prepared to make amends for this weakness, by rendering the Revolution more imposing and more formidable without. Though destitute of all the *matériel* of an army, the French soldiers, strong in their military spirit, and their love of glory, pushed forward on all sides. In

November, 1794, the French forces occupied the banks of the Rhine, from Bâle to the sea, and in January, 1795, they had revolutionized Holland, and taken possession of that country, which was conquered almost without a blow. The joy excited in France by this event was beyond description, and Pichegru, who commanded the army which had achieved it, was looked upon as the greatest general of the Revolution.

The armies of the south, though not able to boast of the conquest of whole countries, were also very successful. The army of Italy, indeed, alarmed at the fall of Robespierre, stopped in its march on Turin, and retired in disorder to the Col de Tende, but when attacked by the allies it rallied, beat them at Carcaro, and ensured its position by the taking of Vado. The rest of the campaign was spent in insignificant skirmishes; but in the eastern Pyrenees, the French advanced as far as Feguieras, and took possession of this important place on the 27th November, while in the western Pyrenees, they occupied Fontarabia, St. Sebastian, and Tolosa, and advanced upon Pampeluna. Winter, however, approached before this place could be taken, and the army entered winter cantonments at Tolosa and St. Sebastian. The brilliant campaign of 1794 had placed France in possession of Belgium, Holland, the left banks of the Rhine, and a part of Piedmont, of Catalonia, and of Navarre. In the interior the armies of the republic were as successful. La Vendée was no more the theatre of great operations; the peasants, though continuing to detest the Revolution, were desirous of repose, and those that remained in the field were only unprincipled adventurers intent upon pillage. Of the illustrious chiefs of the Vendéans, Charette and Stofflet only survived, and being inimical to each other, instead of concerting their movements together they divided the insurgent country between them. At first General Thureau had been sent against them; he surrounded

their territory with intrenched camps, whence he directed into the interior his *infernal* columns, so called because they destroyed without mercy whatever they met on their way. Charette and Stofflet, however, nothing daunted, with their little bands of determined men, harassed, beat, and at last almost entirely routed these columns. After the fall of Robespierre, Thureau was recalled, together with the representatives who had authorized his barbarities; and conciliation, not extermination, being now the order of the day, the command was given to Canclaux.

The remnants of the Vendean army, which had sought refuge in Brittany, carried on in that province still more fearful struggles than those in La Vendée, and, known under the name of *Chouannerie*, were more like the war of banditti than of regular soldiers. The chiefs were Scepeaux, Bourmont, Cadoudal, and Puisaye, the former general of the Girondins, who was in correspondence with England, and endeavoured to organize the insurrection so as to make it formidable. General Hoche, who was sent against them, taught his soldiers to be pacificators rather than destroyers, and made them respect the customs and particularly the religion of the inhabitants. The chiefs, indignant at the neglect of the Bourbons, and the foreign powers, from whom they did not receive the least encouragement, were doubly disposed to peace when the spirit of the government changed after the 9th Thermidor; as soon, therefore, as the convention offered an amnesty, negotiations were opened. Charette was the first to conclude peace (15th February, 1795). He obtained for his country liberty of religious worship, an indemnity of two millions of francs, the promise that the habitations destroyed by fire should be rebuilt, and the permission to form a territorial guard of two thousand men, to be paid by the state. The *Chouans* were more difficult to treat with, but Hoche exhibited the greatest talent in this ungrateful task, and while



Puisaye was absent in England, his aide-de-camp Cormatin, concluded a peace similar to that of Charette. Stofflet was the last to submit.

The cessation of the reign of terror, the conquest of Holland, and the pacification of La Vendée, rendered the Revolution so formidable in the eyes of the coalition, that many of its members sought to abandon it. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was the first to treat with France (9th February, 1795); he declared himself neutral, and sent an ambassador to Paris. The United Provinces next sought and obtained peace, and a declaration of their independence (16th May), but on very hard conditions: they ceded to France, Northern Flanders, Venloo, Maëstricht, the right of placing garrisons in Grave, Bois-le-duc (Herzogenbusch), Berg-op-Zoom, and Flessingen, and the free navigation of their rivers; they paid besides one hundred millions of florins for the expenses of the war, and formed with France an offensive alliance against England, placing at her disposal thirty ships of war, and twenty-five thousand men. The King of Prussia, seeing Mayence invested, his provinces of Cleves and Juliers (Julich) conquered, and the Stadtholder dispossessed, also demanded to treat with France. The committee of public safety immediately declared the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the first condition of peace. On the 5th April it was concluded on this basis; but the Republic promised in return, to obtain for the King of Prussia, at the period of general peace, indemnities for the war, and engaged to respect the neutrality of the German States allied to him.

The coalition, indignant at this peace, was still more alarmed on seeing a member of the house of Bourbon enter into negotiations with the Republic: the King of Spain, seeing his funds exhausted, and the route to his capital almost laid open to the French, commenced negotiations, which were not, however, concluded before the 14th July, because Charles IV. was anxious

first to obtain the liberty of the two children of Louis XVI., who were still languishing in prison. The Dauphin, however, whom the Royalists called Louis XVII., died before his liberation could be obtained. This unhappy child perished from the effects of the horrid treatment he had received from the cruel guardian, whom the convention had appointed to watch over him, at the time that he was separated from his mother. He lay in a bed that had not been made for more than six months, and he had not strength to do it for himself. His person, as well as his bed and linen, which had not been changed for more than a year, was covered with vermin, and the air of his chamber, which was never cleaned or opened during all that time, was stifling and poisonous. The only luxury allowed him was a pitcher of water; but the poor babe, subdued by bad treatment, had no longer the spirit to wash himself; besides illness began to deprive him of all strength. He asked for nothing, so much did he dread Simon and his other keepers. He was allowed no lights, and spent his days without any kind of occupation. This situation affected his mental, as well as his physical state, and it is not wonderful that he fell into a frightful decay. After the 9th Thermidor, a ray of the humanity which again awakened in France, fell into the prison of this hapless child, and the last months of his miserable existence were soothed by the voice of kindness and sympathy. His cruel guardian had been superseded by men of more humane feelings; but it was too late to save the life of the frail being on whom had been accumulated a weight of misery almost inconceivable. He died on the 8th June, 1795, aged ten years and two months\*. His sister, Madame Royale, was also left in perfect solitude after the death of her aunt, the Princess Elizabeth, and was subjected to every kind of privation and humiliation; but she

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\* *Mémoires de Madame Royale, Duchesse d'Angoulême.*

was of an age to help herself, and was allowed some books and work, so that her life was one of happiness compared to that of her unhappy brother. She was liberated on the 19th December, 1795, and delivered over to Austria in exchange for some French prisoners.

The example of Prussia and Spain was followed by a number of smaller states: Saxony, Hanover, Hesse, Portugal, Naples, the Duchy of Parma, and the Pope, all entered into negotiations with France, and the war was now reduced to the ordinary proportions of a war against England and Austria.

France was, however, still in a most dangerous position, for the struggles between the factions in the interior continued in all their violence, and the Royalists now began to conceive the hope of conquering their enemies through the means of their faults, and spared no efforts to excite their passions against each other. The out-lawed Girondins had been recalled, and now dominated in the convention, where they took the lead in the counter-revolutionary action. Billaud, Collot, and Barrère, were under arrest, and famine still reigned throughout the country, but particularly in the capital, where the rations were reduced to three ounces of bread, and four ounces of meat *per diem*. The Mountainists and the Jacobins, who, though dispersed, were still in full activity, took advantage of the misery of the people to lead them into new riots, in order to strengthen their own party. Their threats and demonstrations became so alarming, that Sièyes, who had regained his voice since the cessation of the reign of terror, and who had become a member of the committee of public safety, proposed the establishment of a martial law, under the name of 'the law of the grand police;' in order that the convention might be protected from renewed violence. This law, which was of the most vigorous character, was directed against all assemblies, in which it should be proposed to

attack public or private property, to re-establish royalty, to subvert the Republic, or to show any hostility against the convention. It was received with applause by all the committees, and it was determined that Sièyes should, as soon as possible, present it to the convention. The day on which the presentations took place, 1st Germinal (21st March), the Jacobins had excited the people also to make a demonstration, which was more difficult to obtain, now that there were no conspicuous chiefs among them. A petition was presented, indicating that the people were tired of political dissensions, and begging the convention to stop persecuting the patriots, and immediately to put in force the Constitution of '93\*; a measure which they thought would, by causing the dissolution of the convention, at once open again all offices of power to their party. And one of the deputies demanded that the declaration of rights should, in accordance with one of the articles of that constitution, be hung up in the hall of the convention. The convention, not at all willing to put in force this constitution, was somewhat embarrassed, until Tallien courageously proclaimed its impracticability, and declared that it was necessary to submit it to a revision. The speeches pronounced on this occasion, and particularly that by the President Thibaudeau, show in a most striking manner the change of opinion which had taken place.

‘A democratic constitution,’ said he, ‘is not one in which the people itself exercises all power. It is one in which a wise distribution of power ensures to the

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\* The Constitutional Law of 1793 established the pure government of the multitude. Not only were the people acknowledged to be the source of all power, but the exercise of power was delegated to them. A government without limits; an extremely rapid succession in the magistracy; direct elections, without any delegation, in which every one joined; primary assemblies, which met at an appointed time without being convened, which named representatives and controlled their acts; a national assembly annually renewed:—such was this constitution. It was suspended immediately after having been made.

people liberty, equality, and tranquillity. But I do not see that this can be the case in a constitution, where, at the side of a national representation, is placed a usurping commune, or factious Jacobins, which does not allow the national representatives the direction of the armed force in the town where they hold their sittings, thus depriving them of the power of defending themselves, and of maintaining their dignity; which grants to a fraction of the people the right of partial insurrection, and the faculty of throwing the state into disorder. It is in vain maintained that an organic law could obviate these difficulties. A simple law may be changed by the legislature, and arrangements of so important a nature as those to be comprised in this organic law, ought to be immutable as the constitution itself. Besides, organic laws are not made in a fortnight, or even in a month; and in the mean time I demand that the constitution shall not be published, but that great vigour be given to the government, and that even, if necessary, greater power be given to the committee of general public safety.'

The petition of the people was not only rejected, but the law proposed by Sièyes was passed, and the mob assembled outside of the convention, having first failed to intimidate the representatives, was next dispersed by the *Muscadins*, who assailed them with their usual weapons, and who had assembled to the number of eleven or twelve hundred.

On the 12th Germinal, the day of the trial of Collet, Billaud, and Barrère, the struggle was renewed. An immense crowd invaded the Tuileries, thronged into the hall of the convention with frightful tumult, crying for bread, and for the Constitution of '93, and preventing by its clamours even its own spokesmen from being heard. The sections adhering to the Thermidorian principles were directed against them by the committees, and succeeded in driving them from the convention, and finally dispersing them.

This proposed diversion in their favour had only hastened the fall of the prisoners. It was decreed that Collot d'Herbois, Billaud-Varennes, and Barrère, with Vadier, who was added to their number, should be transported that very night. Seven other deputies who had spoken in the debate were arrested; and martial law was proclaimed in Paris. The following days nine more Mountainists were arrested, and the convention decreed that all individuals who had contributed to 'the vast tyranny abolished on 9th Thermidor,' should be disarmed; that the national guard should be reorganized on the basis of '89; that all families, whose property had been confiscated for any other cause than emigration, should be reinstated in their rights; that religious worship should be performed in the edifices destined for that purpose; that the revolutionary tribunals should be definitively suppressed; and lastly, that a commission of eleven members, all Girondins, should occupy itself with the framing of a new constitution, that of '93 having been recognised as impracticable.

This last blow was most severely felt by the Jacobins, and to all their other accusations against the convention, they now added that of apostacy. But as the hopes of the Jacobins declined, those of the Royalists rose; the 12th Germinal was a day of triumph to them, and their audacity daily increased. The emigrants began to re-enter their country under false passports; others assembled in Switzerland, announcing their speedy return, and the refractory priests again appeared in the provinces, stirring them up to action. The persecution of those who were reputed terrorists, now began, which was quite as odious and as cruel as that exercised when this party was in power, but which has nevertheless not called forth the same abhorrence, so natural is it to abhor cruelty and injustice committed by law, far more than when committed in an outbreak of human passion. The administrative bodies, which

were mostly composed of Girondins and Royalists, took advantage of the decrees of the convention, to disarm, persecute, and imprison all those who were obnoxious to them. In the south, innumerable assassinations took place, and associations were formed, known under the names of the Companies of Jehu and of the Sun, which made it their business to murder the so-called patriots wherever they met them, even in their own houses. At Lyons the prisons were broken open, and ninety-eight prisoners massacred, and thrown into the Rhone. In a word, the most horrid scenes of the Revolution were equalled, if not surpassed, during the persecution against the revolutionists. At the head of the bands of assassins, were the deputies Isnard, Durand-Maillane, and others. But although such frightful disorders and crimes still continued to disgrace the country, and though the people were still in a state of unequalled misery, the convention was nevertheless able triumphantly to resist every new assault. On the 1st Prairial, it had to meet a very formidable attack. The condemnation and death of Fouquier Tinville, and fifteen of the judges and jury of the revolutionary tribunal, produced great excitement among the people, whom hunger left no rest, and this excitement was again taken advantage of by some designing men, to lead them into an insurrection against the convention. On the morning of the 1st Prairial, the warlike sounds, which so often disturbed the capital, were again heard, and an immense multitude of men and women surrounded the Tuileries, forced the guards at the door, penetrated into the palace, and rushed into the hall of the convention, with the cry that had resounded since the commencement of the Revolution, which had indeed been the pretext for its commencement, and which was now reiterated, after five years spent in deluging the soil of France with the blood of Frenchmen, in pursuit of the liberty which was to insure food to the people. 'Bread, bread,' resounded in the convention, in 1795,

as it resounded outside the palace of Versailles in 1789, yet the members of the convention were the chosen of the people. To the cries for bread were now added others for the Constitution of '93. The alarmed deputies rushed up to the highest seats, where they were protected from the assailants by a few gendarmes. Boissy d'Anglas threw himself into the president's seat, and was immediately surrounded by pikes, guns, and sabres. The deputy Féraud, endeavouring to cover him with his body, was struck down by a ball from a pistol, dragged out of the room, and massacred, and his murderers then returned to present to Boissy the head of his defender. The scene equalled the most atrocious of the Revolution, and the trembling deputies, giving way to the fear it inspired, voted for all the propositions made by the mob, which were of a nature again to reinstate the system destroyed on the 9th Thermidor. Fortunately the triumph of the mob was not of long duration; while coercing the convention, it forgot that the governing bodies, the committees, working in another wing of the palace, remained free, and able to take measures against it. At the very moment when four commissaries chosen by the people, were leaving the assembly to place themselves at the head of a provisional government, they were met by the Thermidorian sections and the *jeunesse dorée*, who attacked the mob, and dispersed it. The convention then immediately annulled the decrees that had been forced from it.

The mob, though dispersed for the moment, did not, however, lay down its arms, but returned on the morrow to engage in a new struggle with the sections; but the people were without leaders, and besides, had not that support from the other classes which they had formerly had. In a few days the convention having taken vigorous measures, and having even threatened to bombard the faubourg St. Antoine, the foremost among the rioters, the people at last submitted, and



from this period their power may be considered at an end. The middle classes had regained power, and though order was not to be triumphant in France before it was imposed by the strong hand of despotism, a more regular government was gradually being established. The great danger to the Republic, now entirely arose from the Royalists, who were aided by the listlessness in which long years of excitement and fear had ended, and who now had partisans, not alone in the sections, but even in the convention and in the committees. The idea of stability connected with a hereditary monarchy, began to lure those whom protracted anarchy had wearied with the name of liberty. The Royalists considered themselves so near the consummation of their wishes, that they even thought of making preparations for the coronation of Louis XVIII., eldest brother of the murdered Louis, and the emigrants prepared for a descent in La Vendée.

The brilliant achievements of the republican armies, in the year 1794, were followed in 1795 by a general discouragement, partly owing to the neglect of the government, which having no longer the 'energy of crime,' was incapable of satisfying all the demands upon it, and the troops were left in a state of dreadful destitution. Their numbers were greatly diminished by desertion, and on all sides the French armies were beginning to retreat. The army of the Rhine had, however, its greatest enemy in its own bosom, for its commander, Pichegru, thinking the Republic lost, and won over by the promises of the Prince of Condé, was meditating treason.

The descent of the Royalists on the coast of France, was a complete failure. Prevented from landing in La Vendée, where Charrette, who had broken his compact with the Republic, was prepared to receive them, they were obliged to disembark in Brittany, where the people, though attached to the royalist cause, were not as devoted as in La Vendée. General Hoche attacked

the royalist army in the peninsula of Quiberon, and completely routed it; the English fleet that had brought it thither, and which was still hovering in the distance, being unable to approach and afford assistance. The Royalists surrendered 21st July, 1795, but the convention having become aware of the growing strength of this party, ordered the death of the prisoners, and seven hundred and eleven emigrants were shot. Charrette, ensconced in his camp at Belleville, responded to this atrocious measure by one as atrocious. He ordered two thousand republicans, who were in his power, to be put to death. The terrible blow received at Quiberon, did not, however, suffice to crush the hopes of the emigrants, who still relied upon the party they had gained in the interior, and all their endeavours were now directed towards persuading the members of the commission of eleven, to introduce monarchical principles into the new constitution. But here they were again disappointed, for the commission presented to the people on the 22nd of August, 1795, a republican constitution, the fourth since 1789. According to this constitution, which was the work of the Girondins, the legislative power was confided to two councils, one composed of five hundred members above the age of thirty, and the other composed of two hundred and fifty members above forty years of age. These councils were both elected by electors named by the primary assemblies, and the third of the members were to be renewed every year. The first council was to propose, the second to sanction the laws, and the latter was also invested with the power of changing the residence of the legislative bodies, and of the executive. The executive power was confided to a directory of five members, having ministers, who were to be responsible. This directory was to be elected by the councils, and each year one member to be withdrawn, and a new one elected. The press, as well as all religious creeds, were to remain

free; popular societies were prohibited; the laws against the emigrants declared irrevocable, &c.

This constitution was accepted by the convention. Wiser than the constituent assembly in this respect, the present assembly decreed that the new constitution should be put in force by its own body, and that two-thirds of the new legislative council should be elected from among its members. The election of members from the convention, was left to the people, but in case the electors refused, the convention was invested with the power of itself making the selection among its members.

These measures gave a severe blow to the Royalists, who were now the only active party, as they had hoped to be able so far to govern the elections, as to ensure a majority of their own party, and the press now abounded with imprecations against that odious assembly, which was endeavouring to perpetuate its own dictatorship, and to destroy the sovereignty of the people. The days of 1789 seemed to have returned, but in an inverse direction. Orators presented themselves in great numbers; the journals, pamphlets, and other kinds of publications of the day, left the convention no rest. In order to act in perfect concert, the assailants avoided all mention of the form of government they desired; but the legitimate king was uppermost in all minds, though none pronounced his name\*. All intrigues, however, were in vain; and though the sections of Paris, with a few exceptions, in accepting the constitution rejected the additional decrees, for once the departments did not follow the example of the capital. There the return of legal order satisfied the majority, and the desire for peace and tranquillity was so great, that the form of government had become indifferent. The constitution, together with the additional decrees, was therefore accepted by a very great

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\* LACRETELLE, *Histoire du Dixhuitième Siècle*.

majority in the primary assemblies, and the convention hastened to proclaim its victory (23rd September, 1795).

The last resource of its opponents was now in insurrection, and they prepared for this by gathering together at Paris as many emigrants and *Chouans* as they could, and by rallying all the discontented about them. For several days, preparations for an insurrection were going on in the capital, and when the convention endeavoured to put a stop to them, by arming a troop of Jacobins, the former agents of the reign of terror, the cries of the sections against the supporters of Robespierre became most violent, and a proclamation was issued by them, declaring that they had ceased to obey the orders of the convention, and calling upon the people to arm. On the 4th October the convention declared itself *en permanence*, and directed General Menou to proceed against the insurgents. But the general, sympathizing more with the Parisians than with the convention, instead of taking decisive measures against them, entered into negotiations with them, and, confiding in their promise to disperse, withdrew his troops. The sections remained together, and their first attempt having been so feebly met, the Parisians began to think that they should gain an easy victory over the convention. But their assembly having dismissed Menou, and given the command to Barras, the general of the 9th Thermidor, this commander had chosen for his lieutenant the young general Bonaparte, a man who never took half measures; and on the morrow, 13th Vendémiaire (5th October, 1795), the Tuileries and its environs were formed into a vast camp, the issues of which were garnished with cannon, and every disposition was made to deliver battle *à outrance* to the insurgents. At four o'clock in the evening the struggle commenced, and though the people were vastly superior in number, Bonaparte's cannon did such execution, that at nine o'clock the

insurgents were completely routed, and four or five hundred men had fallen on both sides.

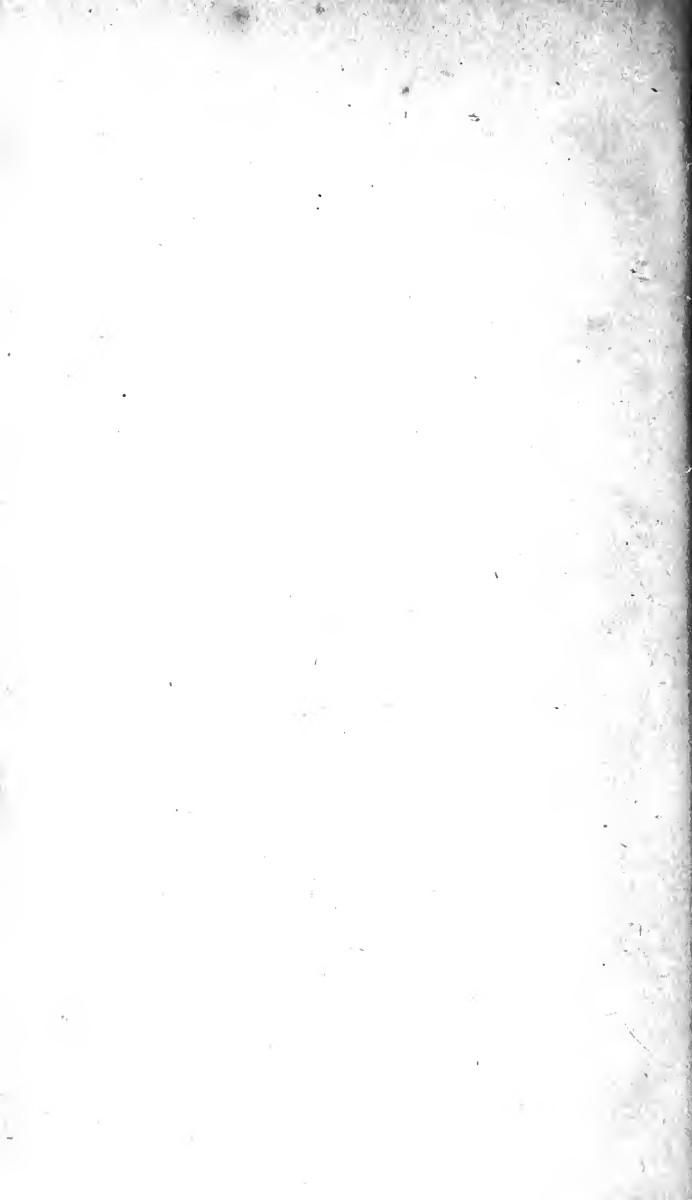
The convention, which had been so severe against the terrorists, was extremely moderate towards the sections, limiting itself to disarming the section Lepelletier, which had been the leader in the insurrection, and to dismissing the staff and the *compagnie d'élite* of the national guards. When this was done, all the prisoners were allowed to escape—one only was shot. However, when the correspondence of Louis XVIII. with his agents had been discovered, and it had been made evident that several of the members of the convention were in connexion with him, it became necessary to take some farther measures against the new attempts at a counter-revolution. Two Thermidorian deputies—Rovère and Saladin—who were convicted of having taken part in the revolt of the sections, were imprisoned, and General Aubry, accused of having favoured the operations of the enemy, was ordered to be arrested. The exclusion of the relatives of emigrants from all legislative, judicial, and administrative functions, was then pronounced; the laws against the transported priests were renewed; the incarcerated 'patriots' released; and the elections being terminated, the convention having solemnly decreed the union of Belgium with France, and having issued an amnesty for all political offences, declared on the 26th October that its mission was terminated.

The directory, which immediately took its place, was a weak but regular government, having to struggle with the heaves and throes which for a long time continued to disturb the state, though the storm was laid. During its reign, all prominent individualities in the interior disappeared, while the generals who carried the conquering arms of France into all countries, rose more and more into pre-eminence, and began to exercise a decided influence over matters in the interior. One name in particular became conspicuous, and the

Revolution had attained its consummation, when Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of France. Of the two inevitable consequences of anarchy—subjugation by a foreign foe, or despotism under an ambitious citizen—the least dreadful fell to the lot of France.

THE END.

LONDON :  
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ST. MARTIN'S LANE.





Parker's  
Collections in Popular  
Literature.



# Collections in Popular Literature,

published by

John W. Parker, London,

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**I**T has frequently been suggested to the Publisher, that he might render an acceptable service to the friends of Education, and greatly assist those who desire to promote the intellectual amusement of the people, by producing a series of Popular Books, at low prices, calculated, by their unexceptionable tendency, for general use in families; from which School Libraries might be formed, Reward Books selected, and Lending Libraries supplied; which, on account of their convenient form and size, would be welcome as Fireside and Travelling Companions; books, in short, which might be found instructive and entertaining wherever introduced.

These suggestions he is now carrying out, in compliance with certain conditions, namely, that the works produced shall be unexceptionable in subject and in treatment; that the series be sufficiently varied to meet the requirements of all classes of readers; and that each book shall be complete in itself, and procurable for a small sum.

The COLLECTIONS IN POPULAR LITERATURE will, therefore, embrace most of the features of an Encyclopædia, though the subjects will not be divided into fragments, or scattered over many volumes; each subject being treated with fulness and completeness, and its information brought up to the present time.

The Plan will embrace new and improved Editions of

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certain Standard English books, but the majority of the works will be newly written, translated, compiled, or abridged, for the present purpose; and the volumes will appear from time to time in sufficient variety to extend simultaneously, and in due proportion, the various branches of Popular Literature. The whole will be prepared with an especial view to the diffusion of sound opinions—to the promulgation of valuable facts and correct principles—and to the due indulgence of general literary taste.

It is not intended that this series shall form a periodical, according to the strict acceptation of that term. Several works are already published, and others will quickly follow; they will all be uniformly bound in cloth and lettered. There will be no necessary connection between the various works, except as regards general appearance, and each, being complete in itself, may be had separately; nevertheless, the volumes, distinct, yet uniform in their object, will together form a valuable library, and may be collected and classified under the following heads:

## I. Popular History.

Under the comprehensive title of History, we purpose giving an extensive series of interesting and instructive works. Among these will be carefully-considered narratives of some of those moral tempests which have so often agitated the world, when men have continued a long course of disobedience to the laws of God and the recognised laws of man. We shall make it our business to record the change of a dynasty, the rise and career of a monarch, a usurper, or a ruler, whose actions have thrown a new aspect on the political institutions of a country; we shall trace the rise and progress of great commercial or manufacturing enterprises, whereby the wealth and prosperity of a nation have been obviously increased; we shall notice the train of events whereby the prevalent or established reli-

gion of a country has been changed. These and other subjects of a like character will enable us to bring up many stores from a mine peculiarly rich in instructive and entertaining matter.

It is of course impossible, in such a notice as this, to include all the features of so important a division of our **COLLECTIONS IN POPULAR LITERATURE** as History; but some idea may be formed of it from the following list:

A History of the Invasion of Russia by Napoleon Bonaparte. 2s. 6d.

The Lord and the Vassal: a Familiar Exposition of the Feudal System in the Middle Ages; with its Causes and Consequences. *In the Press.*

A History of the French Revolution; its Causes and Consequences. Newly written for this Collection. *In the Press.*

The Ruins of Rome and their Historical Associations; including an Account of the Modern City and its Inhabitants. *In the Press.*

The Private Life, Manners, and Customs of the Ancient Romans. From the French of D'Arnay; carefully edited, and forming a valuable work for study or amusement. *In the Press.*

Constantinople and its Historical Associations; with some Account of its Institutions and the Manners and Customs of the People.

History of the Rise and Progress of the Trading Communities of the Middle Ages.

Trading Communities of Modern Times; a Popular View of the Origin, Structure, and General Tendency of the Joint-Stock Trading and Commercial Bodies of Modern Times.

The Ruins of Athens and their Historical Associations; with Notices of the Modern City and its Inhabitants.

A History of London, Ancient and Modern.

A History of the Endowed Schools of Great Britain.

The Incas of Peru, with some Account of the Ruins of their Greatness.

A popular History of the British Army.

A popular History of the British Navy.

The Sicilian Vespers.

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## II. Popular Biography.

One of the most useful and pleasing forms under which knowledge can be presented to the general reader is that of the Biography of distinguished men, who have contributed to the progress of that knowledge in some one or other of its various departments. But it too frequently happens, that the biographical notices of great men consist rather of personal, trivial, and unimportant details, than of a clear and broad outline of the influence which they exerted upon the pursuit and upon the age in which they were distinguished. The true object of Biography is, while tracing the progress of an individual, to show not only what result his active life has produced on the well-being of his fellow-men, but also the position which he occupies as one of the "great landmarks in the map of human nature."

Yet we are not satisfied with a biography which regards its subject in his public capacity alone: we are naturally curious to ascertain whether the same qualities which rendered him celebrated in public, followed him likewise into private life, and distinguished him there. We regard with interest, in his private capacity, the man who has been the originator of much public good: we look with an attentive eye on his behaviour when he stands alone, when his native impulses are under no external excitement; when he is, in fact, "in the undress of one who has retired from the stage on which he felt he had a part to sustain."

But a detail of the public and private events in the life of a distinguished man, do not alone suffice to form a just estimate of his character. The reader requires to be made acquainted with the state of a particular branch of knowledge, at the time when the individual appeared, whose efforts extended its boundaries. Without this it is impossible to estimate the worth of the man, or the blessings and advantages conferred upon society by his means.

On the other hand, in tracing the history of any particu-

lar branch of knowledge, unless connected with Biography, we lose sight of individual efforts; they are mingled with the labours of others, or are absorbed into the history of the whole, and are consequently no longer individualized: hence we are likely to fail in recognising the obligations due to our distinguished countrymen, or to deprive of their just merit those of our foreign brethren, whose useful lives have influenced distant lands as well as their own.

With these views it is proposed that each Biography shall consist of three distinct portions:

1 The history of a particular department of knowledge, up to the time when the individual appeared by whom its boundaries were extended.

2 A *general* sketch of the life of such individual, with *particular* details of the improvements effected by him.

3 The progress of such branch of knowledge, from the date of such improvements up to our own times.

The following subjects form part of this division:

Smeaton and Lighthouses; a Popular Biography, with an Historical Introduction and Sequel. 2s.

Linnaeus and Jussieu; or, the Rise and Progress of Systematic Botany. 2s.

Cuvier and his Works; or the Rise and Progress of Zoology.

Sir Joseph Banks and the Royal Society.

Sir Humphrey Davy and the Safety Lamp.

Brindley and Canals.

Watt and the Steam-engine.

Wedgwood and Pottery.

Telford and Roads and Bridges.

Caxton and the Printing Press.

Galileo and the Telescope.

Sir Isaac Newton and the Progress of Astronomical Discovery.

Sir Christopher Wren and St. Paul's Cathedral.

Addison and the English Essayists.

Jeremy Taylor and some Account of his Times and Works.

Wilberforce and the Slave Trade.

Each work being a Popular Biography, with an Historical Introduction and Sequel.

### III. Popular Science and Art.

When we contemplate the arts and processes of civilized life, we cannot but be struck with the vast amount of invention and ingenuity required for their gradual development. Not an article of clothing or of furniture, not an instrument, implement, or machine, could have been brought to the state in which we find it, without many successive steps of invention, due to different minds, supplied at different times, and brought to light in different countries. But in devoting several of our volumes to the Useful Arts, we shall not be unmindful of the fact, that Art is the application of Science to a practical end. It is proposed, therefore, under the comprehensive title of *Popular Science and Art*, to include portions of our knowledge of animate and inanimate nature. The object will be to assist the general reader to regard with an intelligent eye the varied phenomena of nature, to gratify the laudable desire of understanding what he sees, and of preparing him in some measure to enter more fully upon the study of a given subject. In this way, it is hoped to effect a useful purpose, by connecting Science and the Useful Arts; for "it is not, surely, in the country of Arkwright, that the Philosophy of Commerce can be thought independent of Mechanics; and where Davy has delivered lectures on Agriculture, it would be folly to say that the most philosophic views of Chemistry were not conducive to the making our valleys laugh with corn."

The Useful Arts employed in the Production of Food. 2s. 6d.

The Useful Arts employed in the Production of Clothing. 2s. 6d.

The Useful Arts employed in the Construction of Dwelling Houses. 2s. 6d.

The Writing-Desk and its Contents, taken as a Text for the Familiar Illustration of many important Facts in Experimental Science. 2s.



The above works are already published in this Division, and others on the following subjects are in course of preparation:

Examples of Mechanical Ingenuity.

The Philosophy of the External Senses.

Ancient and Modern Modes of Measuring Time, with curious Illustrations of the application of Clockwork.

The Rise and Progress of Agriculture.

The Natural History of Birds and Insects injurious to Farming and Gardening.

The Wonders of the Microscope.

Mathematical Magic.

The Fine Arts will also form an interesting portion of this Division. The object will be, in a few popular histories, to trace the origin, rise, and progress of Sculpture, Painting, Engraving, Music, &c., and their influence on mankind.

#### IV. Popular Voyages and Travels.

Few subjects are more attractive than the narratives of celebrated travellers. Although they tell us of beings who speak another tongue, inhabit a different clime, differ altogether from ourselves in manners, customs, dress, and institutions—yet the sympathy which man feels for his fellows makes us delight in all the details which talent and enterprise procure for us. The personal narrative of the traveller has also a great charm; we seem to participate in his dangers, excitements, and pleasures; we add to our knowledge in his company; and the truth and sincerity which pervade the narrative, make us feel a personal interest in the narrator. It is intended to reprint some of the narratives of our old English Navigators, especially those of Discoveries, which have had most influence on the progress of Geographical Knowledge. It will not be an objection that these eminent men lived at a period of time distant from our own; for their Narratives are full of truth, told with plain simplicity.

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But the important labours of modern travellers will not be forgotten. In describing several interesting portions of the earth's surface, we shall avail ourselves of the most trustworthy individuals, and by a careful comparison of statements and details, we hope to present graphic descriptions of some of the most celebrated countries of the world; as well as of those which have only of late years been explored. Many voyages of discovery have had their proceedings recorded in large quartos, the price of which places them above the reach of the general reader, while their scientific details render them unfit for popular use; a digest of these works, containing an epitome of the lighter portions, and the results of the scientific discoveries, may prove acceptable.

The following works are in a forward state for publication:

The Life, Adventures, and Discoveries of Captain William Dampier; including a History of the Buccaneers of America.

Captain Cook and the Circumnavigation of the Globe.

An Overland Journey and a Steam Voyage to India.

Voyages and Discoveries in the South Polar Regions.

Voyages and Discoveries in the Northern Polar Regions.

Voyages and Discoveries in Australasia and Polynesia.

To these will be added digests of Travels and Adventures in various Countries of the Old and New Worlds.

## V. Popular Tales and Fiction.

The design of this Collection embraces many favourite old works, which, though containing much that has instructed and delighted our predecessors, are, nevertheless, but ill adapted in their original form for general perusal. Among these may be reckoned some works of fiction, the excellencies of which are often obscured by a grossness of style not uncommon at the time when they were composed,

but which justly excludes them from family reading in the present day. Such works would be acceptable if freed from objectionable passages; and in undertaking to accomplish this reform, without detriment to the spirit of the original, the Publisher relies on the approbation of a large class of persons, who will thus be enabled to place in the hands of the young, purified editions of those romantic and interesting tales which are naturally sought for by youthful readers, whose hands they might otherwise reach, tainted with their original impurities. Every work will be prepared for this series by a careful editing, in order to suit the general tone of thought, principle, and feeling which will pervade the whole Collection, and no work will be admitted, the name of whose author is associated with considerations painful to Christian feeling, good taste, or propriety.

Among the new works intended to be included in this Division, may be mentioned a series of tales, illustrative of the manners and customs of the people of different climes.

The most Delectable History of Reynard the Fox; an old Romance, thoroughly revised and corrected. 2s.

The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins, a Cornish Man. Carefully revised and corrected. 3s.

Norah Toole, a Tale of Ireland; and other Tales illustrative of National and Domestic Manners. 2s.

Van-ti, or the Chinese Magistrate; and other Tales of other Countries. 2s.

The Merchant and the Friar; or, Truths and Fictions of the Middle Ages. A New Edition, revised by the Author. *In the Press.*

Stories of Emigrants, or, Life in Canada, the United States, and Australia.

Carlo the Courier, or, the Travellers in Italy; Annette Darville, or, the French Market Girl; and Herman Stult, or, the German Peasant. Tales illustrative of Life on the Continent. In one Volume.

The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, newly revised; with an Introduction, and numerous Illustrations.

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## VI. Popular Miscellanies.

Under this head will be published, works of a miscellaneous nature which do not fall strictly under any of the foregoing Divisions, or which may include several of those Divisions. Among the former may be mentioned a short series of works on in-door and out-door amusements, the object of which is to furnish young persons with sources of amusement, innocent in their kind, and healthful in their application both to mind and body. Among the in-door amusements may be mentioned a volume which is nearly ready for publication on the game of Chess. Experience has shown that where Chess is introduced as an amusement into families and schools, it exerts a highly beneficial influence, by exciting a taste for more exalted sources of recreation than are afforded by *games of chance*, which so far from producing a beneficial influence on the mind, are apt to disturb the temper, excite animosity, and foster a spirit of gambling. Chess, on the contrary, is an effort of pure skill; it gives healthy exercise to the mental powers; it requires caution and forbearance on the part of both players; it leaves the victor satisfied with having won the game without the additional stimulus of 'a stake;' and it entails no humiliation on the vanquished, but rather prompts him to greater exertions. We propose, therefore, to give the history and antiquities of the game of Chess, together with a series of Easy Lessons, the object of which will be to make the young student acquainted with a few of the leading features of the principal openings, that he may form some idea of the richness of the territory of Chess, and to add a selection of Chess Problems. Chess Problems form one of the most attractive departments of the game; they enable us, more perhaps than anything

else, to appreciate the subtle skill and resources of a first-rate player, and tend to elevate Chess to the rank of mathematical science.

Among the works which include several of the foregoing divisions, is one in four volumes, illustrating the Progress of the Year, wherein the information given is arranged under the form of Daily Readings. All the varied phenomena of nature; the animals, the plants, the minerals, assume different phases, according to the means and acquirements of the observer, the progress of science, and the climate under which the descriptions are given. As science advances, the descriptions of naturalists admit of modification and addition, in order to keep pace with the progress of discovery; hence our Year-books require renewal from time to time. The present is an attempt to furnish a seasonal account of the natural phenomena of the year, in conformity with the present state of knowledge. The work, however, will not be confined to natural history, but will be varied with notices of the arts, antiquities, manners and customs of our native country; choice selections from our prose writers and poets; and a series of papers expressly adapted for Sunday reading, so that on whatever day, and at whatever season, the book be taken up, something appropriate of an instructive and amusing nature may be found, calculated either for family reading, or solitary perusal, as a fireside manual, or a travelling pocket companion.

The following are among the works intended for this portion of the COLLECTIONS:

Chronicles of the Seasons, or the Progress of the Year; being a Course of Daily Instruction and Amusement from the Popular Details of the Natural History, Science, Art, Antiquities, and Biography of our Father-Land. In Four Books.

Book the First, containing January, February, and March, and the Second, April, May, and June, are already published, 3s. 6d. each.

The History, Antiquities, and Curiosities of the Game of Chess; including a Selection of Games, illustrative of the Various Openings, Analyzed and Explained for the use of Young Players; together with a Choice Selection of Chess Problems.

The Sea—the Highway of the World; or the History and Practice of Navigation in Ancient and Modern Times, familiarly explained.

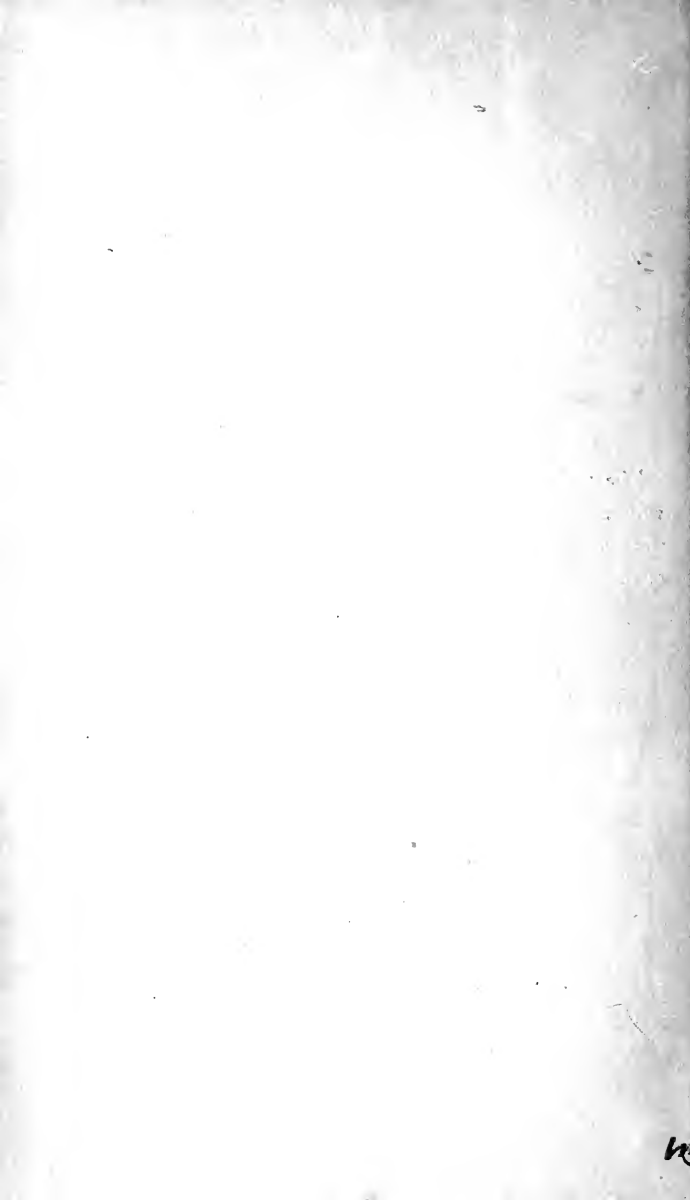
The Houses of all Nations; or some Account, Historical and Descriptive, of the Progress of National and Domestic Architecture in all Parts and Ages of the World.

The Games and Sports of the Ancients and Moderns.

An Account of Shipwrecks, Fires, and other Calamities, at Sea.

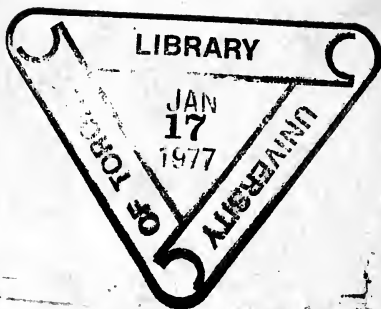
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The works named in this Prospectus are those only which will immediately appear. Other works will from time to time continue to be added to each of the several divisions of the COLLECTIONS IN POPULAR LITERATURE.











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